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THE CHRISTIANITY OF ABRAHAM.

1

THE
CHRISTIANITY OF ABRAHAM:

“ FAITH WHICH WORKETH BY LOVE : ”

WITH
PATRIARCHAL PROPHECY.

BY

*. *. *. Esq.

“ Christianity is a particular scheme under the general plan of Providence, and a part of it, conducive to its completion with regard to mankind—a mysterious œconomy, which has been carrying on from the time the world came into its present wretched state.”—(BUTLER’S ANALOGY, Pt. II. C. VI.)

Seeleys.

FLEET STREET, AND HANOVER STREET.

MDCCCXLVIII.



LEONARD SEELEY, THAMES DITTON.

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Note.—The prophetic addresses by Israel to each of his twelve sons are called in scripture, "*blessings*." In the cases of "Reuben," "Simeon," and "Levi," however, and even in that of "Benjamin," the expressions used are rather those of denunciation.

Nevertheless to these tribes, with the exception of "Simeon," the positive "blessing" is pronounced by Moses. (Deut. xxxiii.) Notwithstanding the merited chastisements to be incurred by some of the brethren's descendants, each was to be the stock of a distinct tribe in the future divinely-appointed national confederacy.

Hence, "all these are the twelve tribes of Israel. And this is it, that their father spake unto them, and *blessed them, every one*, according to his *blessing*, he *blessed* them." (Gen. xlix. 28.)

ERRATA.

<i>Page</i>	<i>8 line</i>	7 for "councils" read "counsels."
—	9 — 22	— "councils" read "counsels."
—	17 — 5	— "thing" read "things."
—	17 — 25	— "Jahpeth" read "Japheth."
—	19 — 15	insert " <i>through</i> " Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
—	54 — 2	for "21" read "12."
—	57 — 8	— "lie" read "be."
—	64 — 26	— "xxv" read "xxxv."
—	66 — 11	for "in any sense, a worldly empire," read "in any sense of worldly empire."
—	113 — 7	— 3, 4. read 6, 7.
—	127 — 4	— "sat" read "set."
—	128 — 5	— "eighty-seventh" read "seventy-seventh."
—	136 —	last line insert "and."
—	138 —	last line for "strictest" read "straitest."
—	157 — 8	— for " <i>his</i> father Laban" read " <i>her</i> ."
—	163 — 3	for "12" read "1, 2."
—	164 —	last line but one for "God" read "man."
—	165 — 5	for "xi" read "ii."
—	177 — 27	— "cover" read "fill."
—	182 — 1	— "His" read "Her."
—	183 — 28	— "seat." read "seat?"
—	184 — 17	— "Shepherd" read "Shepherds."
—	185 — 25	— "father" read "fathers."
—	197 — 13	— "the" read "his."
—	200 — 11	— "did not believe" read "have not believed."
—	236 — 29	dele "future."
—	259 — 3	for "in" read "after."
—	261 — 20	— "rejoined" read "enjoined."
—	267 — 11	— "to" read "in."
—	269 — 17	— "v" read "vi."
—	285 — 22	— for "are" read "an."
—	291 — 23	— "three" read "these."
—	293 — 26	— "partaken" read "experienced."
—	298 — 19	— "¿" read "¡"
—	319 — 20	after "perform" insert "and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness."
—	339 — 16	— "worketh" insert "in us;" dele "1" before "Phil."
—	343 — 14	— "as" insert "the."
—	344 — 18	for "favor" read "favour."
—	357 — 17	for "Pet. ii." read "iii."
—	363 — 19	— "refers" read "refer."
—	384 — 16	— "8" read "28."
—	393 — 11	— "ix" read "iv."
—	398 — 26	— "heretofore" read "hereafter."



NOTICE TO THE READER.

THE first nineteen sections of this volume, which follow the introduction, simply set forth the principal patriarchal prophecies, from Abraham to Naph-tali; with their respective scriptural fulfilments placed in the parallel pages.

To some of these a few explanatory remarks are added.

The sections relating to "Joseph," and "Ben-jamin," are designed to shew the typical connection of Jacob's two sons, by the once barren Rachel, with the conversion of the gentile world.

The twenty-ninth and following sections are intended to exhibit the Christian elements of Abraham's faith;—a faith working obedience by love to God; and justified by His imputed righteousness.

The prophetic scheme, developed in the Old Testament, is viewed as a testimony to the unity of divine revelation, antecedent to its consummation by the Gospel.

The two concluding sections introduce a testimony to the same revealed truth, by confirmation subsequent to the gospel history.

The evidence, both external and internal, which sacred prophecy, in connection with its fulfilment, bears to the truth of divine revelation, is so convincing, that infidelity appears to be almost a wilful perversion of human reason and judgment.

By "external" evidence, that kind of testimony is meant, which is direct and palpable. The realised prediction of an event, which was beyond the possible anticipations of human sagacity, is a miracle; and constitutes a palpable or external proof of divine agency.

"Internal" evidence proceeds rather from inference, than from direct proof. The transcendent purity of gospel morality is internal evidence of its divine authority; as the miracles of Christ were external evidence of his divine power.

The series of scripture prophecies, and their fulfilments, whether those fulfilments be recorded in sacred or profane history, comprises both these descriptions of testimony.

If a person were to announce, (as Daniel announced to Nebuchadnezzar) without any hint to guide him, what had been the exact particulars of a vision in sleep; this would be a miracle! There could be no doubt that such a divination was miraculous. So also, if he were to say, that the subject of the dream

indicated three successive dynasties, destined to supersede an existing government; the actual occurrence of these events, in the course of time, would prove that the prediction had been supernatural.

A certain notary of Ajaccio became an exile, with Paoli, from the city of his residence, and fled from the French troops to the mountains of Corsica. His wife was permitted to return to the city for her confinement, where, in 1769, she gave birth to a son.

Had any one, at that time, declared that the newborn infant should be Emperor of the French; should depose, and create sovereign princes in Europe; and should, finally, die on a barren rock in the Southern Ocean; the event would have proved, that this prediction was miraculous. In 1769, there existed no circumstance, which could prompt the most acute sagacity, even to guess the possibility of such occurrences.

If an exile were wandering in a strange country, having "no inheritance there, no, not so much as to set his foot on;" and, in this unfriended and desolate condition, were he to hear a voice saying, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates;"*

* "In that same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river *Euphrates*. The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the *Hittites*." (Gen. xv. 18. B. C. 1913.)

"Now, after the death of Moses, . . . the Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun, saying, Arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land, which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel

and were his descendants four hundred years afterwards to be in the actual possession of that very territory; the prediction would be proved to have been miraculous.

Were a father to call his sons around him, and to announce, in figurative language, a peculiar destiny as awaiting each of these sons, or the posterity of each; if the histories of these individuals, or of their respective descendants, should, by the event, clearly explain the figurative language which the father had used, and shew beyond doubt, the hidden intent of his first announcement; such announcement would be proved to have been prophetic, in a miraculous sense.

If a particular result were said to be preordained by the operation of means apparently prohibitory of the result proposed; as a numerous progeny by means of conjugal sterility; or the rights of primogeniture, through the last, instead of the first-born; we should perceive a mode of action, quite foreign to the ordinary designs and proceedings of man; and if the result, said to have been so preordained, should be realised by the event, and that, moreover, in a spiritual, and not a worldly, sense; the whole scheme

. . . . from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the *great river, the river Euphrates*, all the land of the *Hittites*." (Jos. i. 2.—B. C. 1451.)

"Of the sons of Reuben . . . Bela inhabited eastward, unto the entering of the wilderness, from the river Euphrates." (1 Chron. v. 9.)

"Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of *Hamath*," (bounded on the north by the Euphrates) "unto the river of Egypt."

would possess a prophetic, and therefore a miraculous character.

Again, if a lawgiver were to prescribe, with great minuteness, a code of ceremonial and moral laws ; and were he finally to proclaim, that all pretension to merit, from the observance of those very rules which he had strictly enjoined, was a delusion ; we should perceive in this the operation of some principle quite distinct and different from any previous experience of human agency. But should we be led to perceive that a principle, so opposed to our customary notions, tended to the humiliation of the creature, and the exaltation of all honour and glory due to the Almighty Creator, we should acknowledge its sublimity ; and we should adore, as a divine truth, that which might first have appeared, to our imperfect conceptions, as anomalous.

For what can be more fitting, than that the Creator should in all things transcend his creatures ! But, if we found, that the merit which we had been disposed to claim as due to our observance of these laws, was withheld, because, in fact, it was unattainable by us ; but that the great Lawgiver, who withheld that merit which his justice could not concede, had, at the same time, provided means, by which it could be gratuitously conferred ; we should discover, that the whole dispensation was one of infinite holiness and goodness. We should find that while the imperfections of the creature tended to exalt the per-

fection of the Creator—so, by His free and unbounded grace and mercy, the righteousness which we could not achieve, had been accomplished by Him for us ; and thus, that “ mercy and truth had met together ; righteousness and peace had kissed each other.”

There could be no stronger external evidence of a supernatural agency than in these instances.

But, if scriptural prophecies and their fulfilment, furnish external proof of supernatural, that is *divine* agency ; so do they also comprise the strongest internal evidence of the general truth of divine revelation.

Among the internal testimonies to scripture truth, the following consideration may have great weight : namely, that the whole series of prophecies, and the records of their accomplishment, have evidently proceeded in no order ; nor upon any plan ; nor to carry out any scheme ; which can possibly be assigned to *individual contrivance*. In the Christian religion we contemplate a perfect unity ; a most beautiful harmony as a *whole* : that is, in its gradual * development from

* The term “ development ” has become a phrase of questionable significance, in consequence of its modern application to Papal superstitions. It has been adopted by those, who, not satisfied with a fundamental unity of faith, yearn for catholicity in collateral doctrines. Hence has arisen a disposition to recognise many of those extravagant excrescences, which were engrafted on the simplicity of the primitive and Apostolic Church, by the ambition, avarice, and superstitious fancies of the early patriarchal and Papal hierarchies. This theory of “ development ” seems to proceed on the assumption, that the Catholic Church, represented by its pontifical chiefs, and by the decrees of oecumenical councils, cannot have erred in its exposition of doctrinal mysteries : that “ the Church,” so represented, is the only true expounder of faith and doctrine : and that even the evangelical records themselves are of authority, more because they have been

the beginning of the world to its perfect accomplishment under the gospel.

sanctioned and adopted by the Church, than as *the* divinely-inspired rule, which gives direction to the Church itself. Thus, the theory in question inverts the proper order of things, by substituting the effect for the cause: by making the Church the authority for Christian faith and doctrine, instead of recognising Holy Scripture as the sole authority from which the Church herself should seek instruction.

‘On what ground, (asks Mr. Newman in his development of Christian doctrine.) On what ground do we receive the canon of the New Testament, as it comes to us, but on the authority of the church of the fourth and fifth centuries?’ This question may perhaps be satisfactorily answered by another. On what ground did the Church of the fourth and fifth centuries rest their authority, if not on the credentials comprised in the canon of the New Testament! The Church proceeds from, and depends upon the gospel, the gospel cannot proceed from or depend upon the Church. It is God’s message—not the message of Man.

Revelation has doubtless been vouchsafed to mankind by a series of gradual development. But that development is embodied solely in the canon of Holy Scripture, comprising the old as well as the new testaments. All points of faith, and all essential doctrines, are comprised therein. Beyond these records there is no divine authority for further “development.” The scheme of man’s salvation is *accomplished* in Christ; the doctrines of that scheme are *completely* expounded by his apostles.

There were *events* in the scheme of man’s redemption, which remained to be fulfilled at a time more or less remote from the apostolic period. But the articles of faith and doctrine of that period were not mere germs to be matured and amplified in after times by a vicarious, but plenary, authority vested in the Church, or its representative in the priesthood.

The instructions which St. Paul gave to Timothy were, that he should *hold fast the form of sound words* which he had heard of *him*, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” Timothy was to “keep that good thing which was committed unto him by the Holy Ghost, *which dwell in the Apostles*.” (2 Tim. i. 13.)

Again, in his epistle to the Corinthians the apostle declares, that “other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” We read of no infallible authority vested in the church, to “build on this foundation,” even “gold, silver, and precious stones;” much less, “wood, hay, stubble.” Such presumptuous “developments” must abide a searching and severe test—“the fire shall declare every man’s work, of what sort it is.” ‘The spirit of the gospel’—says the

But we see in it none of that limited regularity of induction ; none of those closely connected steps of progression, constructed within a narrow space ; nothing in short, of that kind of individuality, which always marks the plan and scheme of any *one* human originator.

In this respect, we may reverentially compare revelation to the legal constitution of our own country. The laws of Lycurgus, of Numa, of Draco, of Solon, of Justinian, of Napoleon, were codes bearing the individual impress of those, by whose authority they were promulgated.

The laws of England are the result of a progressive development. They are not the invention of any one jurist, of any single authority. Their constituent elements are diffused throughout the lapse of centuries ; and, though their effects are harmony, order, and justice, they bear no marks of individuality in their origin and design.

The beneficial result from the concurrence of elements so widely diffused, ought to be gratefully considered as internal evidence of the gracious providence of God over the welfare of this nation.

In like manner, the prophetic elements of divine revelation, are, as it were, of spontaneous growth ;

historian) ‘ evaporated in the pageantry of the church.’ (Decline and Fall, 8vo. Ed. p. 273.)

Mr. Newman would have said, ‘ the pageantry of the Church is a development of the spirit of the gospel.’

Mr. Gibbon had been a Papist ; Mr. Newman unhappily *is* one.

gradual and slow in their progress to maturity, and requiring ages for their accomplishment. It is thus that they furnish in themselves the most unquestionable evidence, that they were not planned by any single *human* design. They possess no such mark of individuality, as the inventions of any one human contriver always exhibit. The attestation of prophecy, and its fulfilment, to the Christian revelation, is diffused throughout the vast space of the world's history. Its rays must be collected from all periods of time, and be traced to that one central object, to which they all incline, and from which, therefore, they have all radiated. That centre is Christ.

Can a system so diffused, yet so concentrated ; so interrupted in its action, yet so continued in its progress ; so various in its elements, yet so uniform in its constitution ; so diversified in its phases, yet so homogeneous in its unity ;—can this be a system, which any one human being contrived and designed ? Can it have been the result of a progressive succession of founders like the legal constitution of our own country ? Revealed religion is a system. It is a system exhibiting all the essentials of unity, harmony, regularity, and determinate design. Man could not have conceived or effected it. Almighty God alone could have *designed* it, and He alone has accomplished it. How powerful is this internal evidence of the truth of divine revelation !

The patriarchal prophecies exhibit a striking

proof of divine inspiration, whether they relate to events connected with the tribes of Israel only ; or whether they comprehend the wider scope of the future gospel dispensation.

God's gracious purpose of calling *the heathen world* to the knowledge of true religion, through Christ, is indicated, in a most remarkable manner, by various types and events in the patriarchal history. This merciful design seems to have constituted that glorious birthright, which was vested in the tribe of Joseph.

It has been our endeavour to illustrate these subjects ; and above all to shew, that the essential principle of the Christian revelation, namely, " righteousness imputed, through Christ, to faith which worketh obedience by love," was fully exhibited in Abraham ; as it was also proclaimed by St. Paul ; and as it has been finally revived at the Reformation.

This fundamental principle, however it may have been lost sight of at various periods, in the mists of human corruption, never totally disappeared, but has at all times constituted the "*unity* of God's will revealed to mankind.

These pages are addressed to those, who, being engaged, like the writer, in secular occupations or amusements, may never have considered very deeply the prophetic evidences of their faith ; or who may never have examined, in a spirit of real interest and inquiry, the pages of holy writ.



In the primitive churches to which St. Paul addressed his ministry, the only recognized characteristic of a christian was "faith unfeigned."

Were all, who are considered to be Christians at the present day, endowed with the grace of unfeigned faith; were their minds really impressed with a deep and habitual conviction of revealed truth;—a conviction operating, daily and hourly, on their actions, tempers, dispositions, words and thoughts;—how happy would be the social intercourse of mankind!

There is no knowledge to be acquired from science, there is no gratification to be derived from literature; which can be compared with those blessings, which result from a thorough conviction of faith—from "faith unfeigned."—"Behold! the fear of the Lord—*that* is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (Job xxviii. 28.)

May the evidences of divine truth, which are set forth in this volume, tend in some degree to rouse the careless, to awaken the inattentive, and to cause that, which may have hitherto been a mere formal *profession* of faith, to become, in all the reality of deep conviction,—a "*faith unfeigned*."

The intrusion of secular pens into the mysteries of holy things has, in many instances, been admitted, as not altogether useless. The 'Internal Evidences' of Mr. Soame Jenyns;—the 'Practical View' of Mr. Wilberforce;—the more important works of still greater men, of a Newton, a Locke, and an

Addison ;—many modern productions, moreover, from secular hands of both sexes ;—have not been rejected on account of their lay origin. The present writer shelters himself behind these examples, though his labours are immeasurably inferior to theirs.

To the ministers of our church, if any such should condescend to look at these pages, he would say, with all the deference and respect which is due to their sacred calling, and to their far superior information on the subjects which he has ventured to discuss ;—“ Would to God, you would bear with me a little ; and indeed bear with me. For we dare not make ourselves of (your) number, or compare ourselves :—not boasting without our measure of other men’s labours—nor of another man’s line of things.”—(2 Cor. x. 15.)—It is with this feeling that the writer has not affixed his name to this production of his leisure. He has ventured to give it publication, as it may possibly do good ; and he humbly hopes, it can do no harm.

He has withheld his name from the title-page, not because he is “ ashamed of Him, and of His words, in a sinful generation ;”—but because neither the writer’s name nor station could give weight or authority to that which he has written.

December, 1847.

THE CHRISTIANITY OF ABRAHAM.



INTRODUCTORY SECTION.

THE writer of the following pages hopes that he shall not incur the charge of presumption, by venturing, as a layman, to publish a treatise on the most sacred of all subjects. He has endeavoured to avoid controversial points of doctrine; and he trusts, that there is not an expression to be found in that which he has written, which could lead any one to imagine, that he intends, either openly, or covertly, to advocate or impugn the disputed opinions of others. The object of the following pages is, simply, if possible, to excite *attention*, (on the part of those, who may not hitherto have *carefully* considered the general scope of holy writ,) to the *Unity of Divine Revelation*. In connection with this view, he has also pointed out the wonderful attestation to revealed truth, which is comprised in the fulfilment, temporal and spiritual, of the Patriarchal and other Prophecies. Prophetic indications are by direct announce-

ment, and by types, which have been universally acknowledged. But there are, also, *events* in sacred history, which seem to have a similar tendency.

The writer is well aware, that whoever enters on this rich and copious enquiry will perhaps be liable to be led away by his own fancy; and may thus be betrayed into a forced interpretation, where no secondary meaning was really designed. In other cases, where the sacred text may seem to be obscure, he may perhaps presume a construction, which will not be apparent to the mind of others. The following pages are intended merely to set forth with great diffidence those views, which have presented themselves to the contemplation of the writer. He entertains no presumptuous idea of *directing* the opinions of others.

If we take a brief review of the wonderful scheme of Divine revelation, we shall perceive that it is beautiful in its harmony, consistent in its *unity*, and, notwithstanding long interruptions and impediments occasioned by human error and depravity, indestructible in its permanency. The elementary principles, which constituted the relation of man to his Almighty Creator appear to be these. First, that God only is good, and holy, and just, and merciful. Secondly, *that He* will nevertheless, *impute* righteousness, by his own free grace, to man, if he will shew forth the sincerity of his faith by its only genuine fruits, namely obedience to his Maker's will. Thus God, in Christ,

will freely justify that true Faith, which worketh by love.

Thirdly, that God has Himself both provided and accepted, through the sacrifice of his blessed Son incarnate, our Lord Jesus Christ, an all-sufficient atonement, for the numerous transgressions of mankind; and has thereby vindicated the perfection of his own holiness, and of his own justice and mercy.

Finally, that He will vouchsafe to sincere Faith a power of obedience, notwithstanding the relapses of human infirmity; and will thus by the free gift of his own Holy Spirit, engraft a principle of holiness in the soul of fallen man.

In brief, righteousness is imputed by God to Faith, which worketh by love, through the atoning and justifying grace of Christ our Redeemer; and the sanctifying grace of the Holy Ghost. Thus, as Father the Creator; as Son the justifying Atonement; as Holy Ghost the Sanctifier; there are three persons, and, as it were, three functions in the Unity of the eternal God-head.

It is in the gradually expanding path of this revelation that they, who are just (that is justified) have, from the days of our first parents, down to the present time, progressively walked, as in "a shining light, that shineth more and more, unto the perfect day." On the other hand, it has been in opposition to this revelation that the wicked have walked "in

darkness, and have known not at what they stumbled." (Proverbs iv. 18, 19.)

The first prohibition of the Almighty Creator was directed against an evil principle, which he knew to be latent in the human heart, namely that principle, which leads men to "*trust in themselves* that they are righteous." Man, in a state of innocence, had perfect faith, and righteousness. Content with the innocency with which God had invested him, man was not to know even the meaning of evil. He was not to be initiated in the perception of that distinction between good and evil which would lead him to a dependence on his own choice and his own strength. God had endowed him with all-sufficient grace; he had formed him in his own image; he was not to be let into the secret of possible vice. Every thing good was heaped upon him; and to this was added the happy incident of an ignorance of evil. So long as he abstained from "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," there was no reservation; every other tree, even that blessed tree, "the tree of Life," was his. His simple faith was perfect,—the righteousness of God, in the image of which he had been formed, was perfect; and the tree of Life was consequently perfect. It was matured, full-grown, abounding in its exquisite fruits, and his own, by the free gift of his Creator. Had the knowledge of good and evil not been acquired, the leaves of that tree would never have been wanted for the *healing* of the nations; for the first

tree of Life in the midst of the garden was already furnished with that fruit, of which he, who should "take and eat, should live for ever." That blessed fruit was the reward, already matured, for that perfect righteousness united to a perfect faith, which, working by a confiding love to the Creator, knew no evil, and claimed no merit, but was engrossed by gratitude and devotion.

"Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food." They were not the results of Adam's labour, but God *made* them to grow—"the tree of life also in the midst of the garden:—and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Of all but the last, man might freely partake. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the *knowledge* of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." He, who was created good, was not to acquire the fatal lesson, by which he would learn to *know* evil. The very knowledge of evil would necessarily impair that righteousness, which was annexed to the obedience of simple faith. There would arise, immediately, a comparison between the evil, which he might learn to know, with the good, of which he would then feel some degree of proud consciousness. The perfect innocency of his condition would be at once impaired. There would be set up in the soul of the creature that principle, most derogatory to the

sole perfection of the Creator, a sense of self-righteousness. There would be an assumption of that principle of goodness, which God alone possesses in Himself; and which his creatures can only attain to, as he may be pleased to *impart* it to them. Then would man commence in his own strength that fatal conflict between good and evil, in which he would be sure to be vanquished. An occasion would be given for sin and disobedience; and death, the penalty of sin, would follow.—“In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”

Ensnared by the wiles of Satan, and seduced by the influence of Eve, Adam aspired to the fatal knowledge, which his merciful Creator had withheld. Not content with their blessed state of confiding innocency, our first parents aspired to be as God himself, “knowing good and evil.” The tree of this knowledge, a knowledge so ruinous to all created beings, seemed to them, under the tempter’s delusion, “a tree to be desired, to make one *wise*.” Eve “took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat;”—“and the eyes of them both were opened.” Evil became present to their souls so soon as they had once transgressed the Divine command. Thus the fruit of that forbidden tree occasioned, as God had foretold to them, “the knowledge of good and evil.” They became sensible of shame. The righteousness, in which they had been created, after God’s image, had constituted a veil to

any idea of imperfection ; but now “ they knew that they were naked.” Their perfect trust in their great Creator and Almighty friend was gone. “ They *made themselves* aprons.” They strove to conceal their imperfections, by works of their own hands. The voice of the Lord was no longer the cheering sound of a gracious and approving master. “ They hid themselves from his presence, amongst the trees of the garden.” “ I heard thy voice in the garden ; and I was afraid, because I was naked ; and I hid myself.” “ And God said, who *told* thee that thou wast naked ?” How came you by the fatal *knowledge* of evil ?—But they had not only learned their lesson of shame. They had attempted to cover it by works of their *own* contrivance. “ They had made *themselves* aprons.” Their shame, however, was to be clothed by far different hands than their own ; their clothing was to be provided by One, far superior to any human power : it was to be of materials which should typify an event, with which the foliage of the fig-tree had no connection. They were clothed by one, who in after times should “ clothe ” them and their posterity with “ the garments of salvation.” (Is. lxi. 10.) The material of their covering was to be taken, not from the trees of the earth, but from those living creatures destined to be, in future years, offered up as sacrifices to the most Holy ; as emblems of one great and final sacrifice. “ Unto Adam and his wife did *the Lord God make* coats of *skins*, and *clothed* them.”

The prescience of the Almighty, like all his other attributes, is perfect. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts xv. 18.) The destiny of Adam and his posterity, though contingent on his obedience or disobedience to the divine injunction, was fore-known by his Creator, and, in his councils, the gracious remedy was pre-ordained. Thus, the names, which our first parents were permitted to assume, had a striking signification as to the ultimate purpose, of which each of them was the origin. "Adam" means that which relates to earth. His sentence was, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou *return unto the ground*; for *out of it* wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The interpretation of "Eve" is "*living*." "Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the *mother of all living*." The name of her husband constituted a perpetual memorial of that temporal dissolution, which their mutual transgression had brought on themselves, and on all their descendants. Her own designation was one of a better hope. It referred not to death, but to *life*. She was the "Mother of all living." In her name we perceive a perpetual sign, not of all those, who, (sprung from her,) should live, only to die; but of those, who, by virtue of the gracious promise of God made to her, should die, to live. God declared that in her seed exclusively, the Serpent's head should be finally

bruised. "I will put enmity between thee and *the woman*, and between thy seed and *her* seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The seed, which should accomplish the victory over the serpent, should be the seed of *the woman*, *her* seed, without the intervention of man. "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, and a woman shall compass a man." (Jer. xxxi. 22.) "Behold! a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Is. vii. 14.) Therefore, "The birth of Jesus Christ was in this wise; when as his Mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." "The Angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. i. 18—21.) This was the seed of the woman, who was mercifully pre-ordained in the councils of infinite goodness, to crush the serpent's head.

Here then we have, at the first period of creation, a full view of Almighty God's revelation to man. That revelation, from its early dawn to its present full and bright effulgence, has exhibited no change, but has progressively increased in the intensity of its light. It has "shined more and more unto the perfect day."

In his state of innocence, Adam possessed that righteousness which God imputed to a perfect faith working a perfect obedience by love. In this happy condition the tree of Life was in the midst of his garden. It required no sacrifice to bring its fruits to maturity. All was perfect, nothing remained to be accomplished. God had effected his own intention. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." "And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold ! it was very good." (Gen. i.) But the perfect obedience of Adam's original righteousness became imperfect. He yielded to the temptation of Satan, and a knowledge of sin accompanied the act of sin. The penalty followed. The perfect and blessed state of the human race became changed into one of transgression and death. The way to the tree of Life in the first Eden was closed, and man had no access to it in his own right. But to this otherwise hopeless captivity to sin and death there was a way of redemption opened through the seed of the woman, who should bruise the serpent's head. The tree of Life was not destroyed. A way to it was still preserved—a way which offered an avenue of future approach to every part of the world. "Cherubims turned *every way*, to *keep the way of the tree of life*." It was not to be profaned by unauthorized intrusion, but the way to it was

still kept. It was preserved in all its vigour until that day, when, instead of "Pison," and "Gihon," and "Hiddekel," and "Euphrates," "a pure river of water, clear as crystal, should proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." And in the midst of the street of it the tree of Life should again appear, bearing twelve manner of fruits, whose "leaves should be for the healing of the nations." Then shall there be "no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it;" and, as Adam and Eve once did, "his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." (Rev. xxii. 1—3.)

"Why callest thou me good?" said our blessed Lord, speaking in his human nature. "There is none good but One, that is God." (Matt. xix. 17.) God only then can possess the knowledge of good and evil without any transgression. Sin was the necessary accompaniment of this knowledge on the part of man. The obedience of faith, therefore, which was perfect in Adam, before he yielded to the tempter, became imperfect afterwards; and so it also descended to his posterity. But, however imperfect in its execution, the obligation still remained. It is the only avenue by which the tree of Life can be regained. It is the necessary preparation for those leaves which shall be for the healing of the nations; which shall "mollify" and anoint, the wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores of human imperfection. (Is. i. 6.)

Thus we shall find, that "faith which worketh by love," is the condition; throughout, on which the fountain which is opened for sin and for uncleanness will be applied to wash away the accompanying pollutions of fallen imperfection. God had appointed the skins of beasts to cover the shame of the first transgressors. He had set a marked preference upon an animal rather than a vegetable material for that purpose. It was no unmeaning preference. He now exhibited another remarkable selection of the two sons of Adam. He distinguished the *younger* with peculiar favour; and we see the adoption of animal objects, rather than those of the earth, as marking the prerogative of divine approval, which was extended to Abel over his elder brother Cain. "Abel was a keeper of sheep," He was the first direct type of the "good Shepherd" who "laid down his life for the sheep." This great sacrifice he also foreshewed by offering the firstlings of his flock on the altar of God. "Cain," also, "brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord." . . . "And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but unto Cain, and his offering, he had not respect." Abel offered "of the firstlings of his flock"—he offered of his lambs. This was the first sacrifice of a "*lamb*" as a burnt-offering, and it prefigured the same great sacrificial atonement which was typified by all the similar offerings which were instituted in after days. God, therefore, had respect to it. The

offering of the elder brother was of the fruits of the ground. It had only a temporal and earthly character. To this offering, God had not respect.

We see in these two brothers the first dawn of the future dispensations of the "promise," and of the "law." The spiritual offering was accepted. The earthly offering was rejected. The first was made by the younger son. In like manner the children of the promise were the younger sons of Abraham. The second was made by the elder son. So also the seed of Abraham after the flesh; the Israelites under the law; were his first-born. Cain, the eldest son, slew his brother Abel; so the elder sons of Abraham under the covenant of the law, slew Him who was the very seed of the promise; the very paschal lamb, whom Abel's offering had prefigured. God "said to Cain, what hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." The elder sons of Abraham, when about to murder the blessed seed of the promise, exclaimed, "his blood be upon us and upon our children." The sentence pronounced upon Adam's eldest son was, "a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." The eldest sons of Abraham are to this day dispersed as fugitives and vagabonds over all countries. Cain perceived that, in consequence of his fratricidal act, he should be an object of aversion to all people. "It shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me." The children of Israel were the

objects of contempt and persecution throughout the period of the middle ages, and are still debarred from an admission to many civil privileges. But "the Lord said unto him, whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold." Thus Jeremiah says of those who should spitefully entreat God's chosen people: "All they that devour thee, shall be devoured: and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity, and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey." "Because they called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after." (Jer. xxx. 16, 17.) Lastly, "the Lord set a mark upon Cain," and the elder sons of Abraham to this day have a mark, a character so striking, that one of their nation can never be mistaken.

But the type of Abraham's younger children of the promise was not to perish with Abel. Amid the corruptions of Adam's progeny, though Lamech might incur the vengeance of God by "slaying a man to his wounding, and a young man to his hurt," (Gen. iv. 23.) yet the faith which worketh by love was not to be utterly extirpated. Eve bare another son, and called his name Seth: for God, said she, "hath appointed me another seed, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Seth was born in "the likeness of his father Adam, after his image." Nevertheless, he was endowed with some portion of the original

principle of good which God had bestowed on his Father. He possessed faith which worketh by love, and through that faith, righteousness was graciously imputed to him by God. By his example and that of his son Enos, "men began," again, "to call upon the name of the Lord." The same precious gift was also conferred on Enoch, the son of Jared, the fifth generation in a direct line from Seth. The faith and piety of Enoch was rewarded by the peculiar acceptance of his Creator, "Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him." (Gen. v. 24.) Throughout the generations of men, from the days of Adam to the period of the Deluge, the free grace of God was never entirely withdrawn. In the midst of general corruption we find it constantly revived in the person of some chosen servant, who still adhered to the faith which worketh by love. Thus "when the wickedness of man was great in the earth; and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;" still, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." He "was a just man and perfect *in his generation*, and Noah walked with God." Apparently with a prophetic direction, if not a prophetic design, Lamech bestowed on him the name of "Noah"—("rest," "consolation")—"This same," he said, "shall comfort us concerning our work, and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord God hath cursed." The true rest and consolation, which the name of Noah signified, was the spiritual

consolation and rest from the evil works of man's hand, by the exercise of faith, which worketh obedience by love and piety towards God. Though "the earth was filled with violence," and "the end of all flesh" was at hand, "with thee," said God, "I will establish my covenant" "for thee have I seen righteous before me in *this generation*. (Gen. vi. and vii.)

The distinction of these chosen men was, that "they walked with God." (See Appendix, note A.) They did not participate in that forgetfulness of his holy name, which seems to have prevailed in proportion as mankind increased in numbers. They walked with God through the obedience of faith, which worketh by love. They had faith in the evidence of things as yet dimly seen; they had faith in the substance of those promises, which, as yet, were faintly hinted, as it were, in the predicted seed of the woman, and in the several types, to which we have referred. They observed sacrificial animal offerings, with a confiding view to the final purport for which they were appointed. The faith which they thus exhibited became more fully developed in Abraham, and has been perfected under the gospel. Our Fathers, and they in the old time before them, embraced and practised that one and the same "faith," which we profess. This is clearly explained by St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, (chap. xi). "By faith," he says, "the elders obtained a good report. By faith,

Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." It was "more excellent," because it prefigured the great future sacrifice of the promised seed. That of Cain was a mere ceremonial sacrifice—an offering by man, of the thing which belong to man. Abel, by sacrificing the firstlings of his flock, "obtained witness that he was righteous"—because it was by the sacrifice of the true Lamb of God alone, that righteousness would be imputed to faith. By the same "faith, Enoch was translated, that he should not see death." "He had this testimony, that he pleased God." "But without faith, it is impossible to please him." "By faith Noah condemned (a faithless) world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

We have thus taken a brief view of the unity of Divine Revelation through the whole period of the antediluvian world.

The first striking event, which we find subsequent to that period, relates to Noah's three sons, "Shem," "Ham," and "Jahpeth." Ham was the father of Canaan. He dishonoured his parent, and proclaimed his irreverence to his brethren. Shem and Japheth, however, both refused to take part in their brother's infamous act. Noah pronounced a prophetic curse

upon Canaan the son of Ham, which has been fulfilled in his posterity upon the earth unto this day. "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." The descendants of Ham are said to have peopled Africa; and the curse of idolatry and slavery has rested on the nations of that vast continent even to our times. But Noah pronounced a blessing upon Shem in these words—"Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." Abraham descended in a direct line from Shem. (Gen. xi. 10.) Thus the Israelites were also the direct progeny of Shem, and they overcame and drove out the Canaanites, and established themselves in their country, which was the land promised to their fathers. So completely was the prediction of Noah fulfilled, "Canaan shall be the servant of Shem." But Canaan was to be the servant not of Shem only, but of Japheth also. Although Japheth was born before Shem, (Gen. x. 21.) yet Shem takes a nominal precedence in the scriptural record of their birth. (Gen. vi. 10; ix. 18.) Shem was "father of all the children of Eber." (x. 21.) He was the root of Israel; and for that reason, perhaps, his name takes precedence of that of his brothers in holy writ. Thus Japheth, in the privileges of the divine decrees, was younger than Shem. Nevertheless, Japheth was to comprise a territorial extension, greater than that of Shem the father of Heber—the founder of the Hebrew nation. His possessions were to include

those of both his brothers; that is, they were to be co-extensive with all the nations of the earth; having a more especial connection with the nation which was to arise from Shem, the fore-father of Abraham. Noah's blessing on Japheth was this—"God shall *enlarge Japheth*, and he shall *dwelt in the tents of Shem*; and Canaan shall be his servant. The northern and western world, were peopled by "Japheth;" as the eastern and southern world were peopled by "Shem," and "Ham." The progeny of Japheth came to be the true spiritual seed of Abraham, by faith in the promise to Sarah the free-woman; and thus have they not only been enlarged, but have dwelt in the tents of Shem; they have partaken in the promise made to Shem's descendants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and superseded them as heirs of an inheritance, which they have misunderstood and rejected.

In the tenth generation from Shem, Abram accompanied his Father Terah from "Ur of the Chaldees," and dwelt at Haran in Mesopotamia.

After Terah's death, the same divine revelation, which we have hitherto contemplated, became more clearly developed by the direct manifestation of Almighty God to his servant Abram.

The Fathers of old had "seen the promises afar off, not having received them." (Heb. xi. 13, 17.) Abram "*received* them." "When he was called to go out into a place, which he should after receive for an inheritance, by faith he obeyed." "He went out, not know-

ing whither he went." " By faith, he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." " For he looked " (not for an earthly inheritance, as his children afterwards did) but " for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Héb. xi. 9, 10.) The whole scope of God's gracious dispensations was made clear to the prophetic sight of Abraham. He received the free grace of righteousness imputed to a faith which " rejoiced to see the day of Christ, which saw it and was glad." He saw the seed of the promise which had been given to him, " So many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand, which is by the seashore, innumerable." His faith, subject as human faith after the fall must ever be to occasional lapses and imperfections, still worked out its proper fruit of obedience by love; and righteousness was imputed unto him. He was a Christian, as of the present day, by anticipation of Faith, two thousand years before the object of that faith was realized. He saw that city of the children of his promise—which neither the Assyrian nor the Roman should destroy—" a city which hath foundations"—the new Jerusalem, " whose builder and maker is God." (Héb. xi. 10.)

We have presumed that " righteousness perfect in faith which worketh obedience by love," was the condition of man, when, formed in the image of God, he came from the hands of his Creator. Disobedi-

ence to a divine command led to the knowledge of good and evil; and, as a necessary consequence, to the forfeiture of original innocence. Nevertheless, the same principle of "faith," though subject, after the fall, to transgression, and thus requiring the great atonement through the seed of the woman, was preserved, by the grace of God's Holy Spirit, in the hearts of those chosen men of the antediluvian world, from Abel to Noah, by whom the one revelation of God's holy will was maintained, and practically shewn forth. (See Heb. xi.)

The same principle of faith, and a trust in the atonement to be provided by God's one oblation through Christ, was again revived, and more fully developed to Abraham. The promise was again renewed; and applied personally to his son Isaac: and further it was personally applied also to Jacob. The promise so given to the three patriarchs, and extended through them to all the families of the earth, is that same promise, now accomplished, in which all true Christians of the present day trust; and, confiding in which, they die in hope and peace. That promise is our "joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom, we have now *received* the atonement." (Rom. v. 11.) It is righteousness *imputed* to faith, "the free gift on all men to *justification* of life." (Rom. v. 18.) It is faith which worketh by love—"through *sanctification* of the Spirit." (2 Thess. ii. 18.)

The dawn of this one revelation did shine forth, though perhaps, more dimly, before the deluge, in those "siders," who "obtained a good report."

Heb. xi. 2.) The same revelation was fully exhibited, though, as it were by anticipation, in Abraham. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he *saw it*, and was glad." It was the "promise" to Isaac: it was the birth-right of Jacob; it was the birth-right, which was taken from Reuben, and conferred on Joseph. (1 Chron. v. 1.) It is the salvation of all mankind. To this revelation there is no restriction—none are excluded from it—"neither Greek, nor Jew; circumcision nor uncircumcision; Barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free; but Christ is all, and in all." (Col. iii. 11.)

The posterity of Jacob was appointed by God, under the law, as the conducting channel for carrying out from the first springs of the "wells of salvation," (Is. xli. 3.) those copious streams of revealed truth, by which the "earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Is. xi. 9.) But Israel would not understand the object of their own great privileges. They looked not to the vast magnitude of that "fountain of living waters," (Jer. xli. 13) of which they were the destined conductors. They understood not their own prophet's prediction,—"*In the wilderness shall waters break out, rivers in the desert," "and the parched ground become a pool; and the thirsty land springs of*

water." (Is. xxxv. 6, 7.) They knew not that these blessed waters were freely offered, through One to be born of their nation, to "*every one* that thirsteth:"—that they were offered "without money, and without price."

They perceived not, that they themselves were appointed as a "chosen generation, a peculiar people," to "call a nation that they knew not;" and that "nations which knew not them, should run unto them." (Isa. lv. i. 5.) They vainly thought, that the blessed streams, which flowed through their channel, were destined to no wider a dispersion than the narrow confines of their own banks. In their law-giver and prophet Moses, they lost sight of their Father Abraham. They did not perceive that the sacrifices of their ceremonial law were "spiritual sacrifices," acceptable to God, (only) by Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. ii. 5.) They venerated their magnificent temple, but they did not recognize its "chief corner-stone, elect, precious"—"unto them which *believe*, precious." They knew not that they were a "royal Priesthood," because from them proceeded the great "High Priest for ever." He who was a "High Priest"—not after their order of Levi—but "after the order of Melchisedek," after the order of him to whom their own levitical order paid tithes in the person of their Father Abraham.

Hence, the perversion by Israel of their own instrumentality, and that of their law, occasioned the

one perfect revelation to be for a long period obscured ; until, in the fulness of time, it shone forth in mid-day splendour—calling both them and all the world “ out of darkness into marvellous light.”

We repeat, that it is our earnest desire, if possible, to excite the attention of those, who may not hitherto have seriously considered the subject, to the *unity* of Almighty God's revelation to man ; to which the Mosaic dispensation was, by His divine appointment, instrumental and subsidiary. We shall first set forth the patriarchal prophecies, and their fulfilment, temporal and spiritual, as these fulfilments are recognized and recorded in holy writ. To these we shall add reflections and remarks on the apparent intent, according to our own view, of various significant passages in Scripture, whether oral or figurative, or in connection with striking historical events.

The promise to Abraham will be the point, from whence we propose now to proceed—that gracious promise, by which he was appointed as the genealogical root, from whence should spring that seed of the woman, of whom it had been foretold to Adam, that it should bruise the serpent's head—that same seed, in which it was promised to Abraham, that all the families of the earth should be blessed.

We shall shew that this promise, which was again conferred personally on Isaac ; and in like manner personally on Jacob, was also the *birth-right*, in which he supplanted Esau, and which was transferred from

Reuben to Joseph, and thus to the line of Ephraim, as the stick marked by prophetic figure for *all* the house of Israel—that is, Jews as well as Gentiles, who should embrace *the faith of Abraham*. We shall point out, as it appears to us, the distinction between the genealogical privilege of the house of Judah, as the stock of Christ's birth ;—as the sovereign or pastoral hand, from which the sceptre, or staff, should not depart, until Shiloh should come ;—and the spiritual privilege of the birth-right of Joseph,—namely the “promise” in its full completion ; that is, the extension of God's revealed salvation to all mankind, Jew and Gentile.

: We shall attempt to shew that, as the Jewish dispensation was instrumental to the end of God's one universal revelation ; so the universality of that revelation is a pervading principle, to be traced throughout the whole chain of prophecy by announcement, by types, and by events, from the beginning of time, to its great accomplishment in Christ Jesus our Lord.

: We have ventured to express our persuasion, that the following doctrine is “the truth” revealed by the general tenor of Holy Scripture ; namely—that the practical condition, (if we may use that term,) on which the free gift of salvation will be vouchsafed to man through Christ's atonement for sin, is the *righteousness of God*, which He will graciously impute to such a faith in Him, and his revealed word,

as will work out an *obedience*, however imperfect, through *love to Him*.

This obedience appears to have been perfect in Adam, when, formed in the image of God, the righteousness of his Creator was fully imputed to him. The same pure and bright principle, though obscured and corrupted by sin and transgression after the fall, has never been entirely obliterated. It survived, even when oppressed under the bondage of the law. The sound of the trumpet, and the shouts of the people, proclaimed that one great principle, the obedience of Faith, before the power of which the walls of Jericho "fell down flat." (Josh. vi. 20.) By the same principle, even "the harlot Rahab perished not with them that *believed not*." It inspired the courage of Joshua. It conferred the power of an host on the scanty band, and on the sword of Gideon—for "the sword of Gideon" was "the sword of the Lord." (Judges vii. 18.) It supported the judgment of Deborah by the arm of Barak. It gave strength to Samson, and resolution to Jephtha. It qualified David as "a man after the Lord's own heart." (1 Sam. xiii. 14.) It was the principle of inspiration to "Samuel and the prophets." (Heb. xi. 30. &c.)

This pure principle of "faith," however it may have been obscured for ages by the idolatry of heathenism, or by the vain dependence of Israel upon the law, is a vital spark, which has never been totally extinguished. It may be compared to "oxygen,"

that wonderful gas in chemistry, which, in its uncombined condition, gives to light a transcendant brilliancy :—which, not only in the animal, but in almost every species of organized matter, is essential to its perfection, however it may be hidden by the admixture of more noxious elements. As the taper sparkles with intense coruscations when plunged into a vessel filled with this vital gas ; so has the light of God's one revelation of his will shone forth in all its pure brilliancy when illustrated by that vital principle—the principle of “ faith, which worketh obedience by love.”

To “ the elders, who obtained a good report ” under the Old Testament, it was “ the substance of things *hoped for* ; the evidence of things *not seen*.” Under the gospel, that substance and that evidence are realized : so that hope has attained, as it were, to fruition ; and faith to certainty. Hence this principle ought to operate with more intense energy than in times of old ; and thus, it is held forth by St. Paul and St. Peter as the vital essence of the Christian profession.

Such are the principal topics, which are proposed to be set forth in the following pages : and, in support of them, we rely on the only unquestionable illustration of which they are capable,—a comparison of spiritual things with spiritual.

SECTION II.

Promise to Abraham.

B.C.
1921.

GEN. xii. " I will make of thee a great nation,
2, 3. and I will bless thee, and make thy name
great ; and thou shalt be a blessing : " " And
I will bless them that bless thee, and curse
him that curseth thee : and in thee shall
" all " families of the earth be blessed."

SECTION II.

Fulfilment.

“Ye men of Israel!” “ye are the children” “of the covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, ‘And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.’”

“Unto you *first*, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” (Acts iii. 12, 25, 26.)
 “They, which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law”—“that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, through faith.”

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to *seeds*, as of many; but as of *one*—and to *thy* seed, which is Christ.” (Gal. iii. 9—16.)

“Lo! in the midst of the throne and of the four

B.C. "Thou shalt be a blessing; and I will
1921. bless them that bless thee, and curse him
that curseth thee."

beasts, and in the midst of the elders, *stood a Lamb as it had been slain.*"

"And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him, that sat upon the throne."

"And when he had taken the book" . . . "they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. v. 6—9.)

B.C. "And Balaam said to Balak, how shall I
1452. *curse* whom *God hath not cursed*? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied? Behold, I have received commandment to *bless*: and *He hath blessed*, and *I cannot reverse it.*" (Num. xxiv. 8—20.)

SECTION III.

Comment on the promise to Abraham.

The stone in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision became a great mountain which *filled the whole earth*, and brake in pieces the image of the great empires of the heathen world. The empire of the mountain, which is already so widely extended, will ultimately become universal. It now engrosses the inheritance of the descendants of Japheth, namely, Europe and the western world ; and in one fundamental particular, it is established over the portion of Shem, namely in the worship of God in unity, and an abhorrence of idolatry and paganism.

The kingdom of the mountain is a spiritual kingdom. It has nothing to do with temporal sovereignty ; and the empires, which it has "broken in pieces," are the idolatrous empires of Heathenism. The reign of the mountain is that of the One only true God, over the usurpations and delusions of Satan. Its subjects are the whole congregation of Christ's church throughout the world, to which it may be

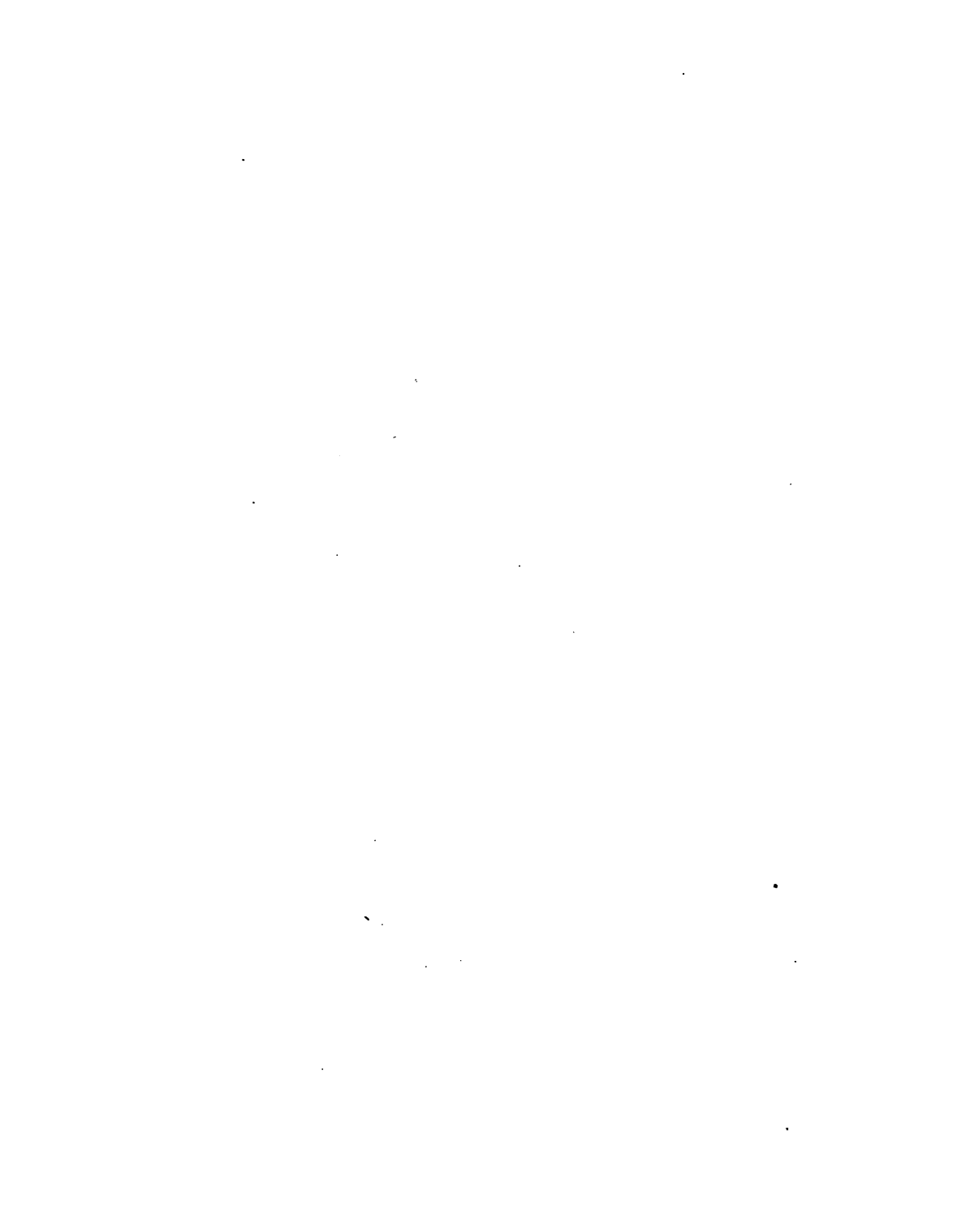
hoped that others, who are yet without the pale of his fold, are, notwithstanding their present prejudices, approaching : as they have taken the first important step to that approach, by recognising and adoring the One God Eternal.

The empire of the mountain is not restricted by any geographical boundaries : in like manner, the great family of the seed of Abraham is not limited to any genealogical descent. It comprises that vast Christian family throughout the world, whose number, in the fulness of time, will be as " the stars of Heaven," and " as the sand which is on the sea-shore." As the " angels round about the throne " are described (Rev. v. 11.) as " ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands : " in like manner, countless also is that innumerable company of angels, whose kingdom is the " Heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the Living God," " the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." (Heb. xii. 23.)

Abraham was the parent stock of this universal spiritual nation, because from him proceeded that blessed seed, Christ Jesus, in whom, the nations of the earth are now in part, and will be collectively, blessed.

It is a great privilege to us, and it will be to those who shall succeed us in still later times, that we possess in prophecy a standing miracle, which becomes more clear, more striking, and more convincing, by

the very lapse of time itself. The light of prophecy is its fulfilment. Our Fathers could only contemplate these predictions "through a glass darkly." Clear as our means of perception at the present day are, even we, yet, "know but in part." "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part, shall be done away." (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10.)



SECTION IV.

Promise to Abraham.*(continued.)*

B.C.
 1913. cir.

GEN. xv. "The word of the Lord came unto Abram saying . . . I am the Lord, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee *this land* to inherit it."—(v. 7.)

"Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a *stranger in a land that is not their's*, and *shall serve them*, and they shall afflict them four hundred years." (13.)

SECTION IV.

Fulfilment.

"This land,"—namely the land of Canaan. Terah, the Father of Abram, went forth with him and the rest of his family, from "Ur" of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. (Gen. xi. 31.)

They sojourned in Haran in Mesopotamia on their way to Canaan; where Terah died.

Thence Abram, with his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot, with all his family, "went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came." (Gen. xii. 5.)

This land of Canaan became the inheritance of Abram's posterity, at the period, and under the circumstances, which God foretold.

B.C. Two hundred and seven years after this
1706. prophecy, the children of Israel, Abraham's seed, came into Egypt, and were "strangers in a land which was not theirs."

“ And also that nation whom they shall serve, will
I judge : and afterwards shall they come out with
great substance.” (v. 14.)

They "*served*" the Egyptians. The Egyptians "set over them task-masters, to afflict them with their burdens"—and "made the children of Israel to *serve with rigour*. And they made their lives *bitter with hard bondage*;" "all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was with rigour*." (Ex. i, 11, 13, 14.

From the birth of Isaac, the first son of the promised *seed*, to the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, the interval of time was about 400 years. The Bible chronology fixes the date of Isaac's birth, in the year 1897 B.C., and the Exodus in 1491 B.C. The difference being 406.

Thus, four hundred years from the birth of his first-born was the term assigned to the bondage of his seed in the land of Egypt. They were "strangers in a land which was not theirs," and served them, and were afflicted, until a period limited by God's prediction, namely four hundred years from the first of the promised seed. (See Appendix, Note B.)

The chastisements, which God inflicted upon the Egyptians, on account of their oppression of his chosen people, are well known to all, who have read the book of Exodus. They came forth from that bondage with "*great substance*." "The children of Israel borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment. And they spoiled the Egyptians." (Ex. xii. 35, 36.)

“Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shalt be buried in a good old age.” (v. 15.)

“In the fourth generation, they shall come hither again : for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” (v. 16.)

“Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river Euphrates.” (v. 18.)

“These are the days of the years of Abraham’s life which he lived; an hundred, three score, and fifteen years.” “Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a *good old age*; an *old man and full of years*; and was gathered to his people.” (Gen. xxv. 7, 8.)

Some of the principal Israelites, who went out of Egypt, to inherit the land of Canaan, were of the fourth generation, from the twelve patriarchs. Thus Aaron and Moses were sons of Amram, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi. (Ex. vi. 16—20.) Caleb was the son of Hezron, the son of Pharez, the son of Judah. (1 Chron. ii. 4—18.) The land of Canaan was promised, not to Abraham individually, but to his seed, namely, to the descendants of his twelve great grandsons, who were the founders of the twelve tribes of Israel and Judah.

They, who constituted the numerous people of Israel, having left the promised land, and sojourned as slaves in Egypt, came thither again in the fourth generation, and executed the righteous judgments of God upon the Amorites and other tribes of Canaan, whose iniquities were then ripe for punishment.

The kingdom of Israel attained the climax of its power and glory, in the reign of Solomon. “King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth, for

riches and for wisdom." (1 Kings x. '23.) At the dedication of the temple, he held "a feast, and all Israel with him, from the entering in of *Hamath* (the northern boundary, not far from the Euphrates) unto the river of Egypt." (1 Kings viii. 65.)

The geographical position of "Hamath" appears to be about one degree of S. latitude, and one degree of longitude, W., from the nearest bend of the river Euphrates. (See Arrowsmith's Bible Atlas, 9.)

SECTION V.

Comment on the promise to Abraham.

The common assertion of infidelity, with respect to prophecies, has been, that they were written *after* the event. A prophecy fraudulently forged would, probably, in all such cases be as clear an exposition of the event pretended to have been foretold, as could be set forth. Or at least it would be so constructed, as to leave no room for any question, as to its intended application. Fraudulent prophecies, announced *before* the event, would, on the contrary, be as obscure, vague, and convertible to any affirmative or negative result of the event in question, as ingenuity and art could frame them. Of this kind were the oracles of paganism.

When Pyrrhus consulted one of them on his projected expedition against the Romans, he received the following answer. “Credo te, Œacida, Romanos vincere posse.”

This sentence can be literally and grammatically construed in two ways, thus—

“ I believe, O descendant of *Æacus*, that *thou art able to conquer the Romans*,” or—“ that *the Romans are able to conquer thee*.” The imputation of this kind of oracular ambiguity has, we believe, never been alleged against the prophecies of the Bible. The only resource has been, when the coincidence is too clear and striking to be denied, to affirm that they are not genuine or authentic, and were forged after the event.

Suppose this kind of objection to be made against that part of the prophecy to Abraham, which is the subject of our present consideration, in which God assures him—“ thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace—thou shalt be buried in a good old age.” We find that this prophecy and the event exactly concurred. He “ died in a good old age ; an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people.” In this case Moses, who recorded the circumstance, might have invented the prediction from his knowledge of the fact. But if Moses invented the whole prophecy by God to Abraham, after he had conducted the Israelites out of Egypt, intending to lead and establish them in the land of Canaan—if this prophecy had not been a patriarchal tradition, which he recorded, but a fiction, which he invented ;—he adopted a mode of expression, which must have betrayed his imposition at once. The prophecy, which he recorded, is this—“ Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve

them, and they shall afflict them." So far the prophecy and the events are so accurately coincident, that the prediction might have been invented to suit the facts: but we have not completed the sentence. "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs; and they shall serve them, and they *shall afflict them 400 years.*"

"Four hundred years!" why Moses and the Israelites well knew, that their captivity in Egypt had lasted 215 years only. Surely the most credulous incredulity could never imagine, that Moses would wilfully discredit his own pretended prophecy, by making it affirm that, which he and all his nation knew was not the fact. It may, possibly, have been for the special purpose of confuting these cavils of scepticism, that God has caused many prophecies, to be clear and unquestionable in their *application to events*, but, at the same time, partially *obscure in their expression*. If the prediction and its accomplishment be precisely exact, we see how plausible the objection is, that the prediction is a pretence, and a mere appendage to the fact. But in the prophecy before us, there is a difficulty, an apparent error and mis-statement, such a one as no impostor would dream of encumbering his own deception with. Therefore, this prophecy could not have been an invention of Moses, but must have been a standing tradition, which he recorded. If it was a tradition, it was also a prophecy, because the tradition ~~is~~ the

prophecy. The very difficulty, therefore, which the prophecy comprises, proves its prophetic character. That difficulty is, as it were, the mint stamp, which indicates its sterling value. But it is very remarkable, that the difficulty here, having performed that important function, becomes a difficulty no longer, but rather a further proof in confirmation.

The four hundred years, here referred to, do not comprise that, which the context, as recorded by Moses, would lead us at first sight to suppose. They are certainly not 400 years of servitude by the Israelites in Egypt. But they are a prophetic term, referring to some period. What then is that period? It is one which applies, not to Abraham personally, but to his "*Seed*"—"thy seed shall be a stranger," &c. &c. The first of that seed was Isaac, who was born B.C. 1897. The period then must start from that point. The Hebrews escaped from Egypt in 1491, B.C. Here is an exact period of 406 years; or 400 years in round numbers. Thus the prophetic intention is perfectly clear, though the mode of expression, by which Moses recorded it, be not so.

The term of 400 years was announced by God to Abraham, not as the period of *duration*, but as the period of the *cessation* of that bondage, which was to afflict his seed, "*as strangers in a land not theirs.*" It is as if He had said, "know of a surety, that thy seed (until the end of four hundred years from its first germination) shall be a stranger in a land that is

not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them." Had Moses been inspired to use terms as exact and specific as these, the credentials of the whole prophecy would have been impaired, by a very natural suspicion that it was merely a pretended prediction, accommodated to the occurrence of well known historical facts.

It is singular, that an apparent similar vagueness of expression is used in Exodus, with respect to the sojourning of the Israelites in Egypt.

"Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day, it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord, went out from the land of Egypt." (Ex. xii. 40, 41.)

A careless reader would probably understand from this, that Moses has recorded the captivity in Egypt to have lasted 430 years. But he states nothing of the kind. That, which he has recorded, is this, namely, that the children of Israel dwelt in Egypt; and that their "*sojourning*" (the period when they had no fixed country as a nation) was four hundred and thirty years.

The fact was exactly so. Abraham and his seed *possessed* no country in their own right as a nation, until they became established in the promised land. The following account is quoted in the notes to Mant's Bible from Bishop Patrick.

	Years.
From the time when Abram arrived in Canaan	
from Haran, to the birth of Isaac	25
From the birth of Isaac, to that of Jacob. . .	60
From Jacob's birth, until he went into Egypt	130
Period of the Israelites' servitude in Egypt	215

Years 430

Some may imagine, that occasional difficulties or obscurities in the Bible are an impediment to its credentials as a revelation from God. On us they produce an impression quite the reverse. We feel persuaded that, had it pleased Almighty God, to vouchsafe his revelation to us, as to every minute particular, in accordance with our ideas of exactness and precision, the records of holy writ would have wanted a very material ingredient in those elements, which are essential to produce a conviction of their divine origin in every really inquiring mind. In these occasional difficulties, or partial obscurities, we perceive a mode of communication, which no mere man would designedly use.

To a human writer, every ambiguity would appear to incur the risk of impeaching the credibility of the accounts which he was recording, or the doctrines which he desired to establish. He would, therefore, cautiously avoid every expression, which appeared calculated to raise a doubt; unless his special object was to mystify, puzzle, and perplex; and to gain converts, rather

y superstition than persuasion. This was the design of the oracles of the heathen world; and the same design is apparent in the writings of many of the religious impostors of more recent times. But the most bigotted opponents of the Bible have never attempted to impute a scheme of that kind to the collection of records, which are comprised in that wonderful volume.

There is a certain degree of analogy between those disturbing actions, which pervade the physical laws of the universe, and those few and occasional difficulties and ambiguities, which may at first sight, *seem*, to disturb the precision of Holy Writ. We are inclined to think, that this analogy enables us to trace in both the mode of action adopted by the same divine Creator. Man, as a mechanist, would avoid, as far as he possibly could, every disturbance of the powers at his command, and of the principles, by which his results are calculated. As a writer, with a view to conviction, he would equally avoid all the objections, to which ambiguity or difficulty would tend to expose him. But God "seeth not as man seeth;" yet "he is not the author of confusion," (1 Cor. xiv. 33.) but, "He discovereth deep things out of darkness." (Job xii. 22.)

SECTION VI.

Prophecy concerning Ishmael.

B.C.
1898.

GEN. xvii. 20. "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee. Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly."
" *Twelve Princes shall he beget*, and I will make him a great nation."

SECTION VI.

Fulfilment.

GEN. xxv. " These are the generations of Ishmael,

12. Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham. The first-born of Ishmael, Nebajoth¹; and Kedar², and Adbeel³, and Mibsam⁴; and Mishma⁵, and Dumah⁶, and Massa⁷; Hadar⁸, and Tema⁹, Jetur¹⁰, Naphish¹¹, and Kedemah¹²."

" These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their towns and by their castles; twelve *Princes* according to their nations."

SECTION VII.

Comment on the preceding Prophecy.

As the Israelites descended by twelve distinct tribes, from the twelve sons of Israel, so the Ishmaelites descended from the twelve sons of Ishmael. The rite of circumcision was ordained by the Almighty, not for Isaac and his seed only, but for Ishmael and his descendants also. Both the Jews and the Arabs have constantly adhered to this institution, which is a perpetual mark of the descent of both from Abraham.

These are the only two nations, as Bishop Newton observes "who have subsisted as a distinct people from the beginning. In these two races, we have, as it were, ocular demonstration for our faith," in the scriptural account of their origin.

SECTION VIII.

Prophecy concerning Isaac.

GEN. xxi. "And God said unto Abraham, in Isaac
21. shall thy seed be called."

SECTION VIII.

Fulfillment.

ROM. ix. "They are not all Israel, which are of
7—9. Israel. Neither, because they are the seed
of Abraham, are they all children:" but
"in *Isaac* shall thy seed be called."

"They which are the children of the
flesh, these are not the children of God;
but the *children of the promise* are counted
for *the seed*." "For this is the word of
promise"—"Sarah shall have a son."

JOSHUA "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel," "I
xxiv. 2, 3. took your Father Abraham," "and multi-
plied his seed and gave him *Isaac*."

AMOS vii. "Prophecy not against Israel, and drop
16, 9. not thy word against the *house of Isaac*."
"The high places of *Isaac* shall be desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid
waste."

B.C.
1804. cir.

GEN. xxvi. "And the Lord appeared unto Isaac, and
2—4. said :—Go not down into Egypt, dwell in
the land which I shall tell thee of." "So-
journ in this land and I will bless thee ;
for *unto thee* and unto *thy seed*, *I will give*
all these countries : and I will perform the
oath which I swear unto Abraham thy Fa-
ther." And I will make thy seed to mul-
tiply *as the stars of Heaven*, and will give
unto thy seed all these countries : and in
thy seed shall all the nations of the earth
be blessed."

GEN. "And Jacob blessed Joseph and said,"
 xlviii. 16. "Let my name be named on them, and the
 names of my Fathers, Abraham *and Isaac.*"

B.C. "Then will I remember my covenant with
 1491. Jacob, and also my covenant *with Isaac,*
 LEV. xxvi. and also my covenant with Abraham I will
 42—44. remember; and *I will remember the land.*"
 "When they lie in the land of their enemies,
will I not cast them away; neither will I
abhor them to destroy them utterly; and to
break my covenant with them; for I am
 the Lord their God."

HEB. xi. "Through faith, Sara herself received
 11, 12. strength to conceive seed." "Therefore
 sprang there, even of one, and him as good
 as dead, so many as *the stars of the sky in*
multitude, and as the sand which is by the
 sea shore, innumerable."

SECTION IX.

Prophecy concerning Jacob.

GEN. xxvii. "And Isaac said unto Jacob, see ! *the smell*
 27. *of my son is as the smell of a field which*
the Lord hath blessed."

"Therefore God give thee of the *dew of Heaven,*
and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and
wine." (v. 28.)

B.C. "Let people serve thee, and nations bow
 1760. cir. down to thee." (v. 29.)

SECTION IX.

Fulfilment.

Ps. xlv. 7, .9 "Thy seat, O God, endureth for ever, the
sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre."
"All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes
and cassia."

The smell of Jacob, to the prophetic senses of
Isaac, was "*the sweet savour of Christ in them that
are saved.*" (2 Cor.ii. 15.)

DEUT. "Israel shall dwell in safety alone. The
xxxiii. 28. fountains of Jacob shall be upon a *land of
corn and wine*, also his *heavens shall drop
down dew.*"

B.C.
1732. cir. "The terror of God was upon the cities
GEN. that were round about them, and they
xxv. 5. did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."
B.C.
1451. "This day will I begin to put the dread of

"Be *Lord over thy brethren* and let thy Mother's sons bow down to thee." "Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." (v. 29.)

B.C.
1760. cir.

GEN. xxviii. "And Isaac called Jacob and said," "God 1—14. Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people." "And give thee the blessing of Abraham to thee and to thy seed with thee." "And Jacob dreamed, and behold the Lord stood above, and said" "*Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth*; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

thee, and the fear of thee upon the nations
 DEUT. ii. that are under the whole heaven, who shall
 25. hear report of thee, and shall tremble and
 be in anguish because of thee."

B.C. "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith
 397. cir. the Lord; yet I loved Jacob" "and I
 MAL. i. 2, 3, hated Esau."

ROM. ix. "This is the word of promise," "Sarah
 9—13. shall have a son." "And not only this,
 but when Rebecca also had conceived by
 one, even by our Father Isaac," "it was said
 unto her, the *elder shall serve the younger*."
 "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I
 hated."

B.C. "Balaam took up his parable and said"—
 1452. "Balak hath brought me from Aram"—
 NUM. "saying, come curse me Jacob; and come
 xxiii. defy Israel." "How shall I curse, whom
 7—10. God hath not cursed; and how shall I
 defy whom the Lord hath not defied?"
 "For from the top of the rocks I see him,
 and from the hills I behold him. Lo the
 people shall dwell alone, and shall not be
 reckoned among the nations."—"Who can
 count the dust of Jacob, and the number of
 the fourth part of Israel?"

SECTION X.

Comment on the preceding prophecies.

The prophecies relating to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were all necessarily similar ; and they all tend to the same wonderful and glorious results. The faith, righteousness and obedience of Abraham were to be rewarded, and have been rewarded, by the Almighty's selection of him, as the original stock, from whence was to proceed, and from whence has proceeded, in due time, a *seed* in whom "all the families of the earth should be blessed." And this seed is "Christ," who "now once in the end of the world hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. ix. 26.)

"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.)

The promised seed was to proceed from the second son, in two succeeding generations : from Isaac, the second son of Abraham ; and from Jacob, the second

son of Isaac. "The elder shall serve the younger," was God's decree. The inheritance was spiritual, and had nothing to do with any human laws or usages of primogeniture. The pardoning mercy of God is his own free gift, and therefore "hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy." (Rom. ix. 18.) It was God's good pleasure to appoint the two elder brothers, Ishmael and Esau, to *temporal* kingdoms, and to establish his own *divine* kingdom in the line of Isaac and Jacob. When Esau implored a blessing from his father, "Isaac answered and said, behold I have made Jacob thy Lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants." (Gen. xxvii. 37.)

This pre-eminence was a spiritual rather than a temporal distinction; for when the two brothers encountered each other at Penuel, Esau was already a chief at the head of four hundred men, and Jacob accosted him with every demonstration of deference and submission. "He bowed himself to the ground seven times." (Gen. xxxiii. 8.) Jacob had hardly established his own independence of Laban, when Esau was already a Prince "in the land of Seir, the country of Edom." At the prospect of meeting his powerful and rival brother, "Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." He prayed to God, "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children." (Gen. xxxii. 11.) Moreover, when Isaac granted his qua-

lified blessing to his elder son Esau, though he forewarned him that he should “serve his brother,” yet he added—“It shall come to pass, when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.” (Gen. xxvii. 40.)

In the year 889 B.C., nearly 900 years after this prophecy of Isaac was uttered, “the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah;” (2 Chron. xxi. 8.) “and hereby,” says Bishop Newton, “this part of the prophecy was fulfilled.” The emancipation of Esau from “the yoke of Jacob,” and the establishment of his “dominion,” were finally realized when Herod, son of Antipater, the Idumæan, was made King of the Jews, 36 years B.C. Thus the birthright which Esau lost, and which Jacob obtained, was a spiritual, rather than a worldly, privilege. With this intent, the wrestling angel, at the river Jabbok, changed the name of Jacob to “Israel,” that is, a “*Prince with God*.” (Gen. xxxii. 28.) This change of name was further confirmed by God to Jacob at Padan-aram. “God said unto him, thy name is Jacob,” (that is, he that supplants, or undermines,) “thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but *Israel* shall be thy name—and He called his name *Israel*,” (a prince with God—or a wrestler with God, or prevailing with God.) (Gen. xxv. 10.)

Isaac’s second son, (when, perhaps from worldly motives of ambition, he refused to share his pottage with his elder brother, who was “faint with hunger”

and "at the point to die," unless he would consent to sell his birthright; and when afterwards he deceitfully supplanted him in his Father's blessing,) was rightly called "*Jacob*."

In a mere temporal and worldly sense, from the moment of his birth, until he surreptitiously obtained the final blessing of his father, Jacob was an usurper of his twin-elder brother's rights. He had scarce entered into the world, when he seized his brother's heel. Hence the name bestowed upon him, signifies "heel," or "one that supplants or undermines."

But after he had wrestled with the angel of God, striving for the high prize of his blessing, and persevering even under the anguish of a dislocated thigh, the glorious destiny, to which he was appointed, became apparent, and was openly declared by God's decree.

"Thy name shall not be called any more "*Jacob*," (the usurper of Esau's temporal inheritance) but "*Israel*"—a Prince with God; "for as a prince, thou hast power with God and with man, and hast prevailed."

As a prince, his power was not to be that of earthly dominion, but a power far more glorious and comprehensive—a power with God—in relation to man; this was the wondrous privilege and blessing for which he had struggled and prevailed. His victory had established him, not as a mighty potentate on earth, but as "strong in the Lord, and in the

power of *his might*;" and, through that promised seed, which was to spring from him, would mankind "*prevail*," when, clad "in the whole armour of God," they should "*wrestle*," not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world—against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephes. vi. 12.)

Thus were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob chosen, not for the purpose which their descendants vainly imagined; not that they might become, in any sense, a worldly empire, a "chosen generation," but that they might be *spiritually* a "peculiar people," destined to be the instruments of the Almighty's gracious purposes of salvation, towards "all the families of the earth."

The prophet Balaam described them as a people perfectly distinct from, and unlike the powerful empires of the world. "Lo!" said he, "the people shall *dwell alone*, and shall *not be reckoned among the nations*." (Numb. xxiii. 9.)

Those countless numbers, which were to proceed from the patriarchal stock, were not their "children in the flesh." "These, says St. Paul, "are not the children of God; but *the children of the promise are counted for the seed*." (Rom. ix. 8.)

In this sense it is, that the progeny of Jacob was to be "as dust," and even "the fourth part of Israel" not to be numbered; for these divine and gracious

purposes, his "kingdom was to be exalted," and "his kings to be higher than Agag." "A sceptre was to rise out of Israel," and "a star to come out of Jacob." (Numb. xxiv. 7, 17.)

Then was this prediction accomplished, when "a star was seen in the east," and "they that saw it, rejoiced with great joy," and thus "*a sceptre of righteousness* was the sceptre of that kingdom." (Heb. i. 8.)

The true kingdom of the patriarchs was to be that prophetic kingdom of "the stone cut out without hands," which "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44.)

That stone which was "built up, a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ:—"Of this spiritual house, "the chief corner-stone" has been laid, "elect and precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (1 Pet. ii. 5, 6.) But alas! this very stone, the head of the corner, has been disallowed by its own builders, and to them it has proved "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence." (Rom. ix. 33.)

Bishop Newton seems to contemplate the accomplishment of these prophecies, as literally realized, in the vast population of the Jewish nation. But the true fulfilment is that which St. Paul points out to the Galatians (c. iii. 29.) namely, that all people throughout the world, "whether Jews or Greeks,

whether bond or free," "*if they be Christ's, are Abraham's seed—and heirs according to the promise.*"

He, therefore, that would "count the dust of Jacob," or "number the fourth part of Israel," must search the record of that vision, which revealed to St. John the number of those, who will be sealed in their foreheads as the servants of God. Of the *literal tribes* of the children of Israel, according to their *earthly descent*, there will be found but twelve thousand of each tribe. But "*After that*" "Lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of *all nations and kindreds and people and tongues*, standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," and "with a loud voice crying" "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Rev. vii. 9, 10.)

In considering the prophetic parts of Holy Scripture, we are far from intending to let loose the reins of our own fancy, or to claim an unreasonable license for analogy. Our wish is simply, to compare spiritual things with spiritual, and to point out the fulfilment of scripture prophecy by an appeal to the authority of scripture itself. Nevertheless, the very elements of sacred prophecy are emblematical; and without presuming to pronounce on their intended application, where they are not so noticed in holy writ, we may perhaps venture to remark on any striking analogies, which occur to us. In considering the promises an

nounced by God to the three Patriarchs, there are circumstances which have strongly impressed us, as being typical of that full revelation of a Trinity in the unity of the Godhead, which has been declared by the gospel.

The promised seed was appointed by God to *Abraham*, explicitly, sufficiently and repeatedly. The same promise was with equal fulness made to *Isaac*; the same promise was also made to *Jacob*. Each one of the three, was specially and *personally selected*: Abraham in the first instance; Isaac in preference to Ishmael; Jacob in preference to Esau. The two latter were chosen, not *solely* because they were the son and grandson of Abraham. They were chosen *individually*, as Abraham himself had been chosen.

The privilege was, and the blessing was, to each of the three, coequal; the privilege was, and the blessing was, to each of the three independent, though not irrespective of the other two. The promise to Abraham was, "in THEE shall all families of the earth be blessed." The promise to Isaac was, "in THY seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," The promise to Jacob was, "in THEE; and in THY SEED shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Had Abraham been omitted, the promise would have been complete in Isaac, and in Jacob. Had any two of the three been omitted, the promise would have been complete in the remaining one.

Thus the promise was one; but it was threefold in its personal application.

Such as the promise was to Abraham; so was it to Isaac; and so was it to Jacob.

As the object of this glorious promise, "None was before or after the other; none was greater or less than the other, but all the three persons were co-equal." Each was appointed by God to be *primarily*, not by descent, but *individually*, in *himself*, the stock, from whence the promised *seed* was to come. Isaac was as much the original stock by promise, though not after the flesh, as Abraham: and Jacob, equally so with Isaac. The Jews are referred in holy writ not more to one, than to the others of the three, as their progenitor. They are called "children of the *stock of Abraham*," by St. Paul, (Acts xiii. 26.) and "*the house of Isaac*" by Amos. (vii. 16.) They are styled "*the seed of Jacob*" by Jeremiah (xxxiii. 26.) and "*the children of Israel*" by Ezekiel (xliv. 15.)

Each of the three patriarchs then, was an original and primary *stock*, according to promise, from whence the destined "seed" was to spring. Was each of these stocks then to produce its own seed of promise? Were there to be *three* seeds of promise from these *three* appointed stocks? By no means. "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of *one*; and to *thy* seed, which *is Christ*." (Gal. iii. 16.)

One seed can proceed only from *one stock*. There

is therefore but *one stock* of the promised seed, but constituting this one stock, there are *three* distinct and coequal *persons*. Thus, though the three patriarchs were *one*, as it were, as the stock of the promised seed ; they were three in person, and also in the peculiar functions to which they were personally appointed.

Abraham was "the Father" of the faithful. "*Your Father Abraham* rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." (John viii. 56.) "They which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Gal. iii. 9.) In distinction of persons, Abraham has always the precedence. God announced himself to Moses at Horeb, as the God of his *Father*, not of his *Fathers*. Yet this Father was *three in persons*. "I am the God of thy Father: the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Ex. iii. 6.) These, though three in person, were *one* as the Father of the Israelites. Abraham's name is nevertheless first, whenever the three are named together in the Bible. When the persons of the Trinity in Unity are distinguished in the New Testament, this distinction is always expressed as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; so when the persons of the Father of Israel are named together, it is always as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Isaac was Abraham's "only-begotten son" of the promise. "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine *only son*, in blessing I will bless thee." (Gen. xxii. 16, 17.)

As God the Father has sent his "only-begotten son," (1 John iv. 9.) "in whom he was well pleased," (Matt. iii. 17.) to be "offered up," (Heb. vii. 27.) "a sacrifice for sins," (Heb. x. 12.) so Father Abraham prepared to offer up "his only son Isaac, whom he loved," as "a burnt-offering" on Mount Moriah.

That Isaac was a type of Christ is so generally acknowledged, that it is unnecessary to point out here the many striking analogies, between him and the second person of the ever-blessed Trinity. They will be found, as noticed by Archbishop Secker, in the notes to Mant's Bible.

The task allotted to Jacob was one of a very peculiar kind. When left alone, he *wrestled* with an Angel of God, and would not let him go, until he had obtained his blessing. For this, his name was changed to "Israel," a prince, having a prevailing power with God and with men. "By his strength he had power with God, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him." (Hosea xii. 4.)

St. Paul says, that, we know not what we should pray for as we ought." It is "*the Spirit itself*, which maketh intercessions for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. viii. 26.) He exhorts the Roman converts, that they "*strive* together with him, in their prayers to God." (Rom. xv. 30.) The same Apostle teaches the Ephesians, *how* they are to "wrestle against the rulers of the darkness

of this world ; against spiritual wickedness in high places." They are to be armed with " the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephes. vi. 12—17.) To the Hebrews he describes " the word of God " (this sword of the Spirit) as " sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." (Heb. iv. 12.) The wrestling of Israel appears to be a very striking emblem of that Holy Spirit, who strives, and wrestles, as it were, with God, in behalf of man, " making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." As Jacob wrestled with the angel of God, even until the " hollow of his thigh was out of joint ; " so does the Holy Spirit prevail with God for us with an earnestness and energy, which can be compared to nothing less, than " the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, of soul and spirit."

We may further observe that, as Jacob " strove " with the " man " " until the breaking of the day," and " would not let him go," until he had ascertained whether he was in truth an angel, that could bless him ; so we are enjoined by St. John, to " try the spirits, whether they are of God." (1 John iv. 1.)

Jacob earnestly implored the being, with whom he had so perseveringly struggled, to tell him, who he was. " Tell me, I pray thee, thy name." The answer to, and the compliance with, this prayer, was remarkable. " Wherefore is it, that thou dost ask

after *my name* ? ” It was “ a name, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.” (Rev. ii. 17.) Jacob did receive it; for the man “ blessed him there;” and then he at once knew, in whose presence he was. “ And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel;” (vision of God) “ for,” said he, “ I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” (Gen. xxxii. 30.)

Thus, St. John tells us, that in “ trying the spirits, whether they are of God,” we shall have a sure test that they are so, if they accompany a sincere confession, that “ Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.” “ Hereby know ye the spirit of God; every spirit, that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God.” (1 John iv. 2.)

The blessing on Jacob led at once to his confession, “ I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”

“ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,” if “ we are the children of God.” (Rom. viii. 16.) It will lead us at once to confess, that “ Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,” and we shall be preserved to life eternal.

SECTION XI.

Prophetic blessings of Jacob on Reuben.

B.C.
1689.

GEN. xlix. " Reuben, thou art my first-born. *Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.*—Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed." (v. 3.)

SECTION XI.

Fulfilment.

Though Reuben was the “first-born” of Jacob, “the beginning of his strength, the excellency of his dignity, and the excellency of his power;”—yet, for the offence, of which he had been guilty, he was “not *to excel*.”

Thus, we find, that the tribe of Reuben was less numerous than many of the other tribes. “Of the tribe of Reuben were 46,500.” Of that of Simeon were 59,300.—Of that of Judah 74,600.—Of that of Zebulon 57,400.—Of that of Issachar 54,400.—Of that of Dan, 62,700.—Of that of Naphtali, 53,400. (Numb. i. 21—43.)

The portion of Reuben was on the east side of Jordan, in the plains of Moab, to the north of the Dead Sea. That of Gad was in Gilead; and half the tribe of Manasseh occupied the land of Bashan, to the south of mount Hermon. (Joshua xiii. 15—33.) Thus these tribes were geographically separated, and,

as it were, cut off from the other nine tribes and a half by the river Jordan, and the lakes Asphaltes and Gennesaret.

While their brethren, on the west side of this boundary, possessed all the advantages of union and confederacy, Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh, were in a great measure a separate people. They feared, that, in time to come, the children of the other tribes might "speak unto their children, saying—what have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you."

When ten thousand men of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun overthrew the hosts of Sisera, at Mount Tabor, Deborah the prophetess, who then judged Israel, found no support or assistance from the tribe of Reuben. In her song of triumph, Deborah makes a great distinction between the tribes, who marched with Barak, and the unstable and divided tribe of Reuben. "My heart," she says, "is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people." Ephraim, Benjamin, Zebulun, Issachar, were all entitled to her praise; but Reuben "abode among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flock." "For the *divisions of Reuben* there were great thoughts of heart; for the *divisions of Reuben* there were great searchings of heart." (Judges iv. 9, 16.)

The tribes, which were settled beyond Jordan, had

but an uncertain and precarious possession. Hazael, king of Syria, laid waste their territories. "When the Lord began to cut Israel short, Hazael smote them from Jordan eastward—the Gadites—the *Reubenites*, and the Manassites" (2 Kings x. 32, 33.) "Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, carried away captive Beerah. He was prince of the *Reubenites*;" (1 Chron. v. 6.) and in the year 771 B.C. (cir.) "the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the *Reubenites*,"—because "they transgressed against the God of their Fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land." (1 Chron. v. 25, 26.)

Thus was the prophecy of Jacob, against his first-born Reuben, completely fulfilled in the history of that tribe. In their allegiance to the one God Jehovah; and in the possession of their allotted portion of the promised land, they were *unstable as water*, and *did not excel*.

But the sentence, pronounced against the first-born of Israel, was most especially fulfilled by the disinheritorship of his tribe with respect to the spiritual birthright, of that gracious and glorious promise, which God had made to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

The genealogical descent from the respective heads of the twelve tribes is particularised in 1 Chron. v. 1.

It is there recorded—"Now Reuben was the first-born. But forasmuch as he defiled his Father's bed, *his birth-right was given unto the sons of Joseph*, the son of Israel." This birth-right was two-fold.

It signified primarily, and in a temporal sense, that double allotment to one tribe in Canaan, which became necessary, in consequence of there being no apportionment required for Levi. But in a secondary and prophetic sense, it comprised that promised blessing to all the world, which the Almighty had declared should proceed from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as one root in three persons.

SECTION XII.

Prophetic blessings of Jacob on Simeon and Levi.

“Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.”

“I will *divide* them in Jacob, and *scatter* them in Israel.” (v. 5—7.)

SECTION XII.

Fulfilment.

The inheritance of Simeon was a *scattered* and *divided* inheritance. When Joshua cast lots in Shiloh before the Lord, the second lot came forth to Simeon. But we read of no geographical boundaries, and defined extent of territory, as in the preceding lot of Benjamin. Simeon's lot comprised merely some scattered towns and villages "within the inheritance of the children of Judah."

"Out of the portion of the children of Judah, was the inheritance of the children of Simeon, for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them: therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance of them." (Joshua xix. 1—9.)

So straitened were the Simeonites in their scattered cities, that, "when the house of their fathers increased greatly," they were compelled to migrate; and they "went to the entrance of Gedor"—"to seek for pasture for their flocks." "And some of

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them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to Mount Seir." (1 Chron. iv. 38—42.)

It is well known that "Levi had no part nor inheritance with his brethren."

His tribe was "separated, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name." (Deut. x. 8. and xviii.)

Thus was Jacob's prediction literally fulfilled, that Simeon and Levi should be "*divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel.*"

SECTION XIII.

Prophetic blessings of Jacob on Judah.

“Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee.” (v. 8.)

“Thine hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies.”

SECTION XIII.

Fulfilment.

“Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler.” (1 Chron. v. 2)

“The Lord God of Israel hath chosen *Judah to be the ruler.*” (1 Chron. xxviii. 4.)

“As the men of Judah shouted, the men of Israel fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hands.” (2 Chron. xiii. 16.)

“The envy of Ephraim shall depart, Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.” (Is. xi. 13.)

“Toward the rising of the sun, shall they of the standard of the *camp of Judah* pitch;”—“all that were numbered of the camp of Judah were an hundred thousand and fourscore thousand, and six thousand and four hundred.” “These shall set forth *first.*” (Numb. ii. 3, 9.)

“Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.” (Micah v. 9.)

“Judah is a Lion’s whelp. From the prey, my son, thou art gone up. He stooped down, he couched as a Lion, and as an old Lion; who shall rouse him up?” (v. 9.)

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” (v. 10.)

“ Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed.” (Rev. v. 5.)

“ The remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many people, as a Lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young Lion, among the flocks of sheep.” (Micah v. 8.)

B.C. “ Israel rebelled against the house of David
975. unto this day.”—“ There was none that followed the house of David but the *tribe of Judah only*.” (1 Kings xii. 19, 20.)

The word of the Lord “ came unto Shemaiah, saying, Speak to Rehoboam king of Judah,”—“ saying thus saith the Lord ; ye shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel,”—“ for *this thing is from me*.” (1 Kings xii. 22—24.)

B.C. “ Nebuchadnezzar carried away Jehoiachin,
599. king of Judah, to Babylon.” (2 Kings xxiv.

B.C. “ In the seven and thirtieth year of the
562. captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month ”—“ Evil-merodach king of Babylon, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, out of prison ; ” “ and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.” (2 Kings xxv. 27, 28.)

“ As long as the land (of Judah) lay desolate, she kept sabbath, to fulfil three-score and ten years.” (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.)

“In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia,”
 “thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord God of
 Heaven”—“hath charged me to build him an house
 at Jerusalem, *which is in Judah.*” (Ezra. i. 2.)

“Then rose up the chief of the Fathers of *Judah*
 and Benjamin, and the Priests and the Levites”—
 “to build the house of God—that is in Jerusalem.”
 (Ez. i. 5.)

B.C. “This house was finished on the third
 519. day of the month Adar, which was in the
 sixth year of the reign of Darius the
 King.” (Ezra vi. 15.)

Augustus
 Caesar
 Impera-
 tor. “Herod conceived an idea of erecting a
 temple to the honour of God, which should
 be larger and more splendid than the
 former.”

“He assured the people that the old temple should
 remain in its present situation, until the materials for
 the new one should be provided. The old building
 was a composition of durable white stone, each stone
 being eight cubits high, twelve broad, and twenty-
 five in length.” (Josephus, Book xv. c. xiv.)

Vespasian
 Impera-
 tor. “At the time that Titus was endeavouring
 to save the temple, one of the soldiers set
 fire to the door-posts, so that the temple
 was destroyed.”

“In the second year of the reign of Vespasian,
 Titus gave orders that they should reduce the city
 and temple to a level with the ground: and not to

“ Until Shiloh come, and *unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*’ ”

“ Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine.” (v. 11.)

leave any building standing, except three towers. The rest of the city was razed even to the ground." (Josephus, Book vii.)

Caiaphas said unto the people, "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." "And this spake he, not of himself, but, being high Priest that year, he prophesied, that Jesus should die for that nation." "And not for that nation only—but that, also, *he should gather together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad.*" (John xi. 49—53.)

"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto me.*" (John xii. 32.)

"He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. xxiv. 31.)

"I am the *true vine*, and my Father is the husbandman." (John xv. 1.)

"The disciples brought the ass and the colt, and they set him (the true vine) thereon." (Matt. xxi. 7.)

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." "He shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even unto sea, and

“ He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes
in the blood of the grape. His eyes shall be red
with wine.”

“ His eyes shall be red with wine and his teeth
white with milk.” (12.)

from the river, even to the ends of the earth.”
(Zech. ix. 9, 10.)

“ Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah ? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength ? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”

“ Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat ? ”

“ I have trodden the wine-press alone.” (Is. lxiii. 1—3.)

“ Ho ! every one that thirsteth.” . . . “ Come buy *wine and milk*, without money, and without price.” (Is. lv. 1.

“ Desire the sincere *milk* of the word, that ye may grow thereby,” “ if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” (1 Pet. ii. 2—3.)

SECTION XIV.

Comment on Jacob's blessing on Judah.

We find every particular, in the figurative prophecy contained in the blessing of Jacob upon his fourth son Judah, either confirmed by the prophets, who lived many hundred years after, or realized by historical facts. The pre-eminence of Judah over the other tribes is remarkable throughout the whole of their history. During their wandering in the wilderness, on their march to the promised land, the camp of Judah was pitched "towards the *rising sun*," and when the tents were struck, they "set forth first." After the ten tribes had revolted, "the men of Israel fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hand." The prophet Micah confirmed that which Jacob had declared—namely, that "their hand should be in the neck of their enemies." In their intestine wars, and even in their captivity, the ascendancy of the tribe of Judah was maintained.

Evil Merodach, king of Babylon, "spake kindly

to Jehoiachin, king of Judah," and not only released him from prison, but gave him a royal pre-eminence over the kings that were with him in Babylon. Even while the territory of Judah's tribe lay desolate, that very desolation was, in itself, a practical continuance of the sabbatical ordinance, during the whole disastrous period of seventy years ; so that the divine law never entirely departed. (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.)

As the fierce strength of a lion will defend its whelps against the attack of any brute, however powerful ; so did the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevail against all his enemies, and finally re-establish its dominion in its own territory : and that, because it was the destined root of David, the son of Jesse, from whom Messiah was to come.

They, who returned from Babylon by the decree of Cyrus, were the " chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin," and " the Priests the Levites." From that period, (536, B.C.) the seed of Israel became merged, as it were, in Judah ; and the national designation was adopted from that tribe. They were thenceforth commonly known, no longer as Hebrews or Israelites, but " Jews."

Benjamin was the only distinct tribe that accompanied Judah, and with that tribe the scattered remnant of the other ten became nationally identified.

It seems that, after the restoration and the building of the second temple, the political administration of the law, and the service of the sanctuary—(the go-

vernment, civil as well as ecclesiastical,)—was vested in the priesthood, the descendants of the tribe of Levi. Yet this sacerdotal tribe was nationally merged in that of Judah, because Levi never had a distinct political existence. “Thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel; but thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony.” “The children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts”—“but the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony.” (Numb. i. 49—53.)

“The Priests, the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi,”—“shall have no inheritance among their brethren: the Lord is their inheritance.” (Deut. xviii. 1, 2.)

“Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David”—“but Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them.” (1 Chron. xxi. 5, 6.)

“Only unto the tribe of Levi, he gave none inheritance.” (Joshua xiii. 14.)

Thus the sceptre, whether it be considered emblematical of the patriarchal staff, or of supremacy in civil government, survived with Judah especially, after the second temple. We find (Nehemiah xi. 1—4.) that the “rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem. The rest of the people cast lots, to bring one of ten, to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city,” “and

at Jerusalem dwelt the children of Judah and of Benjamin."

Thus were the ten tribes represented by one out of ten, who were specially allotted to reside in the holy city, under *the rulers of the people*, namely Judah and Benjamin, with the priests who dwelt at Jerusalem. The Jewish polity continued the same under the second temple, throughout all the various changes of adversity and prosperity, which befel that unhappy and persecuted people. Though "hardly bested," amidst "trouble, darkness, and dimness of anguish," as a nation, the Jews remained firm "to the law and to the testimony." (Is. viii. 19, 22.)

While suffering under the furious violence of Antiochus Epiphanes, "many in Israel chose rather to die, that they might not be defiled with meats, and that they might not profane the holy covenant." (1 Maccabees i. 63.) B.C. 168. In the true spirit of Judah's kings, in the best reigns of earlier days, Judas Maccabeus, "seeing the coming of the multitude, and the divers preparations of armour, stretched out his hands towards heaven, and called upon the Lord that worketh wonders, knowing that victory cometh not by arms, but even as it seemeth good to him, he giveth it to such as are worthy." Therefore in his prayer he said after this manner. "O Lord! thou didst send thine angel, in the time of Ezekias king of Judea, and didst slay in the host of Sennacherib, an hundred, fourscore and five

thousand ; wherefore now, also, O Lord of heaven ! send a good angel before us, for a fear and dread unto them. And through the might of thine arm, let those be stricken with terror, that come against thy holy people to blaspheme." " Then Judas and his company encountered the enemies with invocation and prayer ; so that fighting with their hands, and praying unto God with their hearts, they slew no less than thirty and five thousand men : for through the appearance of God, they were greatly cheered." (2 Maccabees c. xv.)

There were doubtless many sad apostasies and grievous defections, under the oppression of the Syrian monarch. Nevertheless the temple remained, and the service of God prevailed in Judea, under the glorious rule, and persevering constancy, of the Asmonean princes.

In like manner they continued under Herod, and maintained their integrity, after Palestine became a Roman province.

At length, in the reign of Vespasian, forty years after the crucifixion of Him, to whom " all the prophets give witness," (Acts x. 43.) the temple was burnt, and the city rased to the ground, and the people were utterly dispersed. Then it was, and not till then, that " the sceptre departed from Judah, and a lawgiver from between his feet."

The prophecy proceeds to state, that, when the great event predicted shall occur, when Shiloh shall

come, there shall "be unto him a gathering of the people," "binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine." How strikingly was this fulfilled, when He, who declared himself to be the "true vine," entered Jerusalem as King of Zion, in his meek and lowly state, "sitting upon an ass—and a colt the foal of an ass." Then was there a "gathering of the people," when "the multitude went before him and followed—spreading their garments and strewing branches in the way; and crying Hosanna! to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!"

SECTION XV.

Prophecy on Zebulun.

“ Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea ; and he shall be for an haven of ships, and his border shall be unto Zidon.” (13.)

SECTION XV.

Fulfilment.

The territory of Zebulun was bounded by the sea of Gennesaret on the east. Beyond its western frontier lies that deep bay, of which the promontory of Mount Carmel is the southern extremity. The portion of "Asher," which is beyond the western border of Zebulun, comprises "Tyre and Sidon."

SECTION XVI.

Prophecy on Issachar.

“ Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens ; and he saw that rest was good, and *the land that it was pleasant : and bowed his shoulder to bear.*”

SECTION XVI.

Fulfilment.

Issachar was, numerically, a tribe of considerable strength, and was not without distinction in the history of Israel.

“ The Princes of Issachar were with Deborah and Barak.” (Judges v. 15.) Baasha, the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, slew Nadab, king of Israel, the son of Jeroboam ; and the sceptre of Israel was held by him, and his son Elah, until Zimri utterly destroyed all the wicked house of Baasha. (1 Kings xv. xvi.)

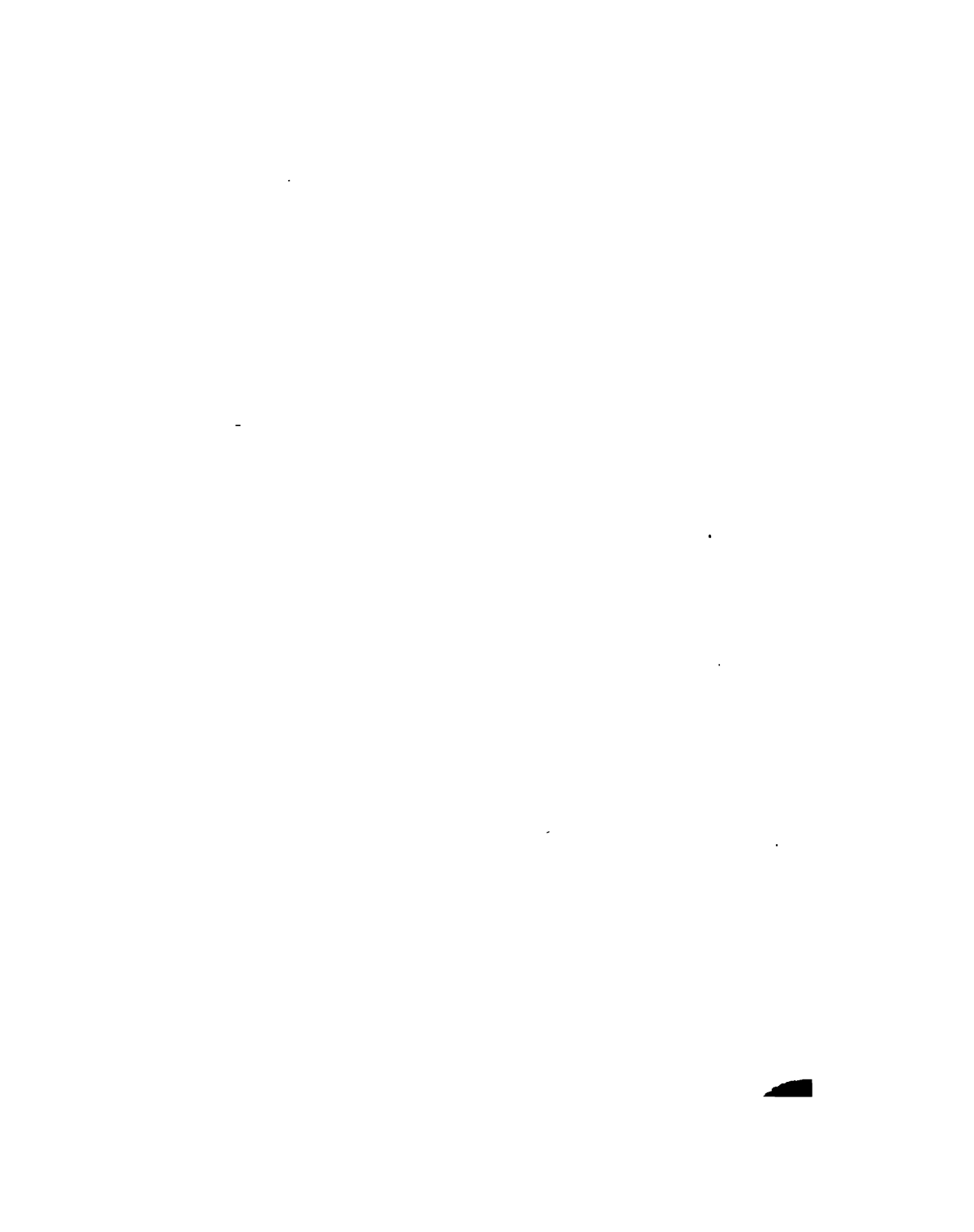
Thus the tribe of Issachar became conspicuous for the political power of one of its chief families.

Its territorial allotment was bounded by Jordan, on the east, and by the River Kishon, on the south, in a rich and fertile soil.

But these possessions were held subject to the intrusion of the tribe of Manasseh, and to the persevering hostility of several cities, which were not abandoned by their original Canaanitish inhabitants.

Manasseh possessed, in Issachar, (as well as in Asher,) several districts and towns, equal to "three countries;" but they could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities, for "the Canaanites would dwell in the land." (Jos. xvii. 11.)

Issachar preferred the quiet enjoyment of her fertile portion to any enlargement of her borders, recognising, in the words of Jacob, that her "land was pleasant"—and "rejoicing in her tents," as Moses predicted. (Deut. xxxiii. 18.)



SECTION XVII.

Prophecy on Dan.

“ Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.” (v. 16.)

“ Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path ; that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backwards.” (v. 17.)

“ I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.” (v. 18.)

SECTION XVII.

Fulfilment.

Samson was son of "Manoah, of the family of the *Danites*." (Judges xiii. 1.) And *he judged Israel twenty years.*

The serpent is described in Genesis as "more subtle than any beast of the field"—and the prophetic character of the tribe of Dan was fulfilled in the remarkable history of Samson. He married a woman of the Philistines, against the remonstrance of his parents; but "they knew not that it was of the Lord, that *he sought an occasion against the Philistines.*" (Judges xiv. 4.) The whole history of Samson, in the various incidents of his marriage at Timnath; his riddle of the honey; the fire-brands and foxes; the deceptions practised on Delilah; and, finally, his petition that he might rest himself by leaning on the pillars in the temple of Dagon; was a continued series of artifices, with a view to circumvent his enemies.

Like a serpent in the way, or an adder in the path, he bit the horses' heels of his foes : and, in his last achievement, the Philistines, in a literal sense, fell backwards.

The children of Dan, on their way to establish themselves in the country of Laish, stole away from the house of Micah his teraphim and ephod, and the young Levite, who officiated as priest. They smote the people of Laish with the edge of the sword, and burned the city with fire, because they knew that the people of Laish "were quiet and dwelt secure," and "had no deliverer," and were "far from Zidon," and "had no business with any man."

Thus, in the person of Samson, and in their invasion of Laish, did the tribe of Dan fully realize the character, which had been predicted by the patriarch Jacob. (Judges xvii and xviii.)

SECTION XVIII.

Prophecy on Gad.

“Gad, a troop shall overcome him ; but he shall overcome at the last.” (v. 19.)

SECTION XVIII.

Fulfilment.

The Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, possessed the land of Gilead. They were guilty of idolatry, "serving Baalim and Ashtaroth," . . . "and forsook the Lord." "For this cause the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon." (Judges x. 3, 4.) Nevertheless, on their repentance, God raised up Jephthah the Gileadite, who "smote the Ammonites with a very great slaughter, and subdued them." (Judges xi. 33.) Thus, though Gad had been overcome, he "overcame at the last."

SECTION XIX.

Prophecy on Asher.

“Out of Asher his bread shall be fat ; and he shall
yield royal dainties.” (v. 20.)

SECTION XIX.

Fulfilment.

“The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher, and reached to Carmel westward.” (Joshua xix. 24—31.) The valley of Carmel was peculiarly fertile—abounding in the richest fruits. The name “Carmel” signifies “*fruitful fields*.”

We read in Isaiah (xxxv. 2.) of “the excellency of Carmel;” and in 2 Chron. xxvi, of the “vine-dressers and husbandmen in Carmel.”

SECTION XX.

Prophecy on Naphtali.

“Naphtali is a hind let loose, he giveth goodly words.” (v. 21.)

SECTION XX.

Fulfilment.

As a hind let loose is found in the midst of a stray herd—so the tribe of Naphtali did “not drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the inhabitants of Bethanath; but dwelt among the Canaanites;” and, by their influence and persuasion, induced “them to become tributaries unto them.” (Judges i. 33.)

SECTION XXI.

Prophecy on Joseph.

“ Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall.” (v. 22.)

“ The archers have sorely grieved him—and shot at him and hated him : but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.” (v. 23, 24.)

SECTION XXI.

Fulfilment.

Two tribes, those of Ephraim and Manasseh, were established in the line of Joseph. Previous to the prophetic blessing, which Jacob pronounced upon his sons, he had promised an inheritance to Joseph, larger than that of his brethren. "I have given to thee, *one portion above thy brethren.*" Thus Joseph became a fruitful bough. From him proceeded two distinct primary branches, issuing from the patriarchal genealogical tree. "They are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." (Deut. xxxiii. 17.)

This part of Jacob's blessing on Joseph seems not to be prophetic. It appears to refer to the unnatural violence and cruelty, exercised towards him by his brethren, when, moved by envy and jealousy, they cast him into the pit, and sold him to Ishmaelite merchants. That Joseph, though sold to be a slave in Egypt, was "made strong" in that country "by

“From thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel.”
(v. 24, 26.)

the hands of the mighty God of Jacob," was a fact which his aged Father had lived to witness.

This is a very significant and important passage in Jacob's prophecy concerning Joseph. "Thence is *the Shepherd*, the stone of Israel." The Shepherd of Israel is the Almighty God Jehovah. Thus in Psalm lxxx. "Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel; thou that leadest *Joseph* like a sheep," . . . "thou that sittest upon the cherubims." The xxiiiird. Psalm appeals to God under the same pastoral figure, and shews the all-sufficiency of his saving protection and preventing grace. "The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore can I *lack nothing*." "He shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort." "He shall *convert my soul*, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; *thy rod and thy staff* comfort me." "Thou shalt *prepare a table before me*" . . . "and *my cup shall be full*."

In like manner Isaiah breaks forth into a prophetic rhapsody of joyful anticipation—"O Zion! that bringest good tidings." . . . "O Jerusalem! that bringest good tidings." . . . "Behold the Lord God will come." . . . "His reward is with him and his work before him." "*He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, He shall gather the lambs with his arm,*

and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Is. xl. 9, 11.)

How, when, and by whom, have these most gracious prophetic promises been realized? Have the "good tidings" from "Zion" and "Jerusalem," been accomplished? Has "the Lord God" indeed "come," "bringing his reward with him," and having "his work before him?" Has he come, "feeding his flock like a shepherd," "gathering the lambs with his arm," and "carrying them in his bosom?" What was the "reward" thus promised? and what that "work" which is here foretold? We shall find a complete answer to these questions in the tenth chapter of the gospel of St. John. Jesus said, "*I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.*" "I am the good Shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine." "As my Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and *I lay down my life for the sheep.*" Yes! this is the great, the stupendous work, which was to be done. "I am come that *they might have life*, and that they might have it more abundantly." Yes! this is the glorious, free, unmerited reward!—and this reward, St. Peter especially announces to those whose task and privilege it is, to "feed the flock of God"—"when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away." (1 Pet. v. 2—4.)

Our immediate concern, however, is with the ap-

plication of Jacob's blessing on his son Joseph, to these great events.

How have they been accomplished in the line of *Joseph*, in accordance with the prophecy now under consideration ?

In what sense is this prophecy peculiarly applicable to *Joseph* ? Emmanuel proceeded lineally from the stock of Judah. To Judah also was the promise, that the sceptre should not depart from his tribe, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until " Shiloh " (He that was to be *sent*) should come. It would seem, therefore, that to Judah, and not to Joseph, the prophecy would apply, that " the arms of his hands should be made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob ; from whence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel."

Let us, however, look a little closer into the patriarchal history. We shall find a very remarkable distinction between the privilege which was assigned to the tribe of Judah ; and that which was conferred on Joseph. The privilege of Judah was merely genealogical. The sceptre of his tribe was not to depart, that is, was to remain ; nor was there to be wanting a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh should come. Under the second temple all the other tribes merged in that of Judah. The whole people, as we have shewn elsewhere, after the captivity, assumed, as their national designation, the title of this tribe.

In this respect, the tribe of Judah comprised within itself, as it were, the tribes of Benjamin and Levi, which returned with it, and also the remnants of the other ten tribes, under one national body politic. But even the political privileges of Judah extended no further than this. The "sceptre" and "the lawgiver" certainly remained to Judah, inasmuch as all the other tribes were comprehended in the designation of that particular tribe.

The "Israelites" became "Jews"—Nevertheless, the authority of government, spiritual and temporal, was exercised by the priests, the descendants of Levi. The Asmonean princes were of this order, and lineally of this tribe; and in them the practical sovereignty was vested. But the permanence of Judah, as a distinct tribe, in its full integrity, giving a national character and designation to all the others, was a pre-eminence of vast import; because from this tribe, without any question or doubt, in a strict lineal descent, proceeded the promised "Shiloh," who was of the house and lineage of David, the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah. As Christians, we acknowledge Christ as the *Shiloh*—the *Sent* by God. The Jews deny it.—But in accordance with their own prophecies, it is quite undeniable, even by the Jews themselves, that, within 40 years after the death of Christ, whom they crucified, Shiloh had come; because, from that period, the sceptre, and the lawgiver, has most effectually departed from Judah.

The Jews reject the Messiah acknowledged by Christians, yet they have never pretended that Shiloh is to be recognized in any other person. They are even now in expectation of their Messiah, and yet, by their own prophecies, the event has happened, which marks the period of time, within which he must have appeared. The advent of Shiloh then has occurred. This advent is the consummation of all their prophecies; the great end and object for which they were chosen as a peculiar people; as the seed, in whom all the families of the earth will be blessed.

For the accomplishment of this great end, the tribe of Judah was preserved to the last, and is the genealogical root, from whence Shiloh has sprung. Is not the genealogical privilege of Judah, then, that inestimable birthright, which Esau sold unto Jacob, and which Reuben forfeited by his transgression? Can we refer to any other than Judah, "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel?"

Let us turn to the fifth chapter of the first book of Chronicles—and we shall find it written, that "the birthright of Reuben was given" (not unto Judah and his sons, but) "*unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.*"

The privilege of Judah then, which was one of genealogy, glorious as this privilege was, is quite distinct from the privilege of the birthright. The

"birthright," is not the point from whence "the genealogy" is to be traced. We must search for the birthright elsewhere, than in the tribe of Judah, (which was that of the genealogy,) and on some other principle.

This birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph. From Joseph proceeded the two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim. Thus Joseph was the father of two distinct tribes; and the portion in the promised land, which was not required for the separate and sacerdotal tribe of Levi, was assigned to his second son Ephraim.

We find these two tribes, however, but little distinguished by any temporal ascendancy, in the history of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. They joined in the general revolt against Rehoboam, and the house of David. "There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only, with the tribe of Benjamin." (1 Kings xii. 20.)

"No man shall spare his brother" saith Isaiah, "they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm,"—"Manasseh, Ephraim, and Ephraim, Manasseh, and they together shall be against Judah." (Is. ix. 19—21.) After the captivity, they became dispersed with the ten tribes of Israel, and their national identity was merged in that of Judah.

How then are we to find the birthright of Joseph and his sons, in Him who is "the Shepherd of Israel?"

In that concise and beautiful historical psalm, supposed to have been composed by Asaph, the Israelites are reproached as a "faithless and stubborn generation : a generation that sat not their heart aright, and whose spirit cleaveth not stedfastly unto God ;" "like as the *children of Ephraim* ; who being harnessed and carrying bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle."

The character and conduct of the sons of Joseph, had so little connection with the prophetic figure of the "shepherd," that, when the Almighty and true Shepherd "led his people forth like sheep ; and carried them in the wilderness like a flock," "when he brought them out safely," . . . "within the borders of his sanctuary, even to his mountain which he purchased with his right hand : " "they turned their backs and fell away like their forefathers ; " . . . "for they grieved him with their hill-altars ; and provoked him to displeasure with their images ; " so that " *he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim,* " "but chose the tribe of Judah." (Ps. lxxviii.) Nevertheless, in the eightieth Psalm, the same inspired writer calls upon God to manifest his protecting strength and power, and to exhibit the saving light of his divine countenance, in an especial manner before the *sons of Joseph* and *Benjamin*. They alone, with Benjamin, are named as objects of the peculiar care of the Heavenly Shepherd of Israel. "Hear ! O thou Shepherd of

Israel ! thou that ledest *Joseph* like a sheep ; shew thyself also, thou that sittest upon the cherubims.” “ Before *Ephraim*, *Benjamin* and *Manasseh*, stir up thy strength and come and help us.” So also in the eighty-seventh Psalm, Joseph is associated with Jacob himself, as eminently distinguished in God’s deliverance of his people. “ Thou hast mightily delivered thy people, even the sons of Jacob and *Joseph*.” In the prophet Amos moreover, we find a special promise in favour of Joseph, even after the dispersion of the tribes, in which Manasseh and Ephraim were included. “ It may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious unto the REMNANT of *Joseph*.” (Amos v. 15.)

How are these denunciations on the one hand, and prophetic blessings and distinctions on the other, to be reconciled in the destiny of the tribes of Joseph ? The blessing on Judah, and the blessing on Joseph, were perfectly distinct in their nature and intent. The blessing of Judah was one of genealogy. In his line after the flesh, Messiah was to be born. His sceptre was not to depart, until Shiloh should come in the line of David, from the tribe of Judah.

The blessing was in its nature of a secular character. It referred to Shiloh’s descent and birth after the flesh ; and to the national permanency of the seed of Abraham, until Shiloh should have come.

The blessing of Joseph was the blessing of the

birthright. This blessing was not temporal in its nature and intent, but altogether spiritual. Let us inquire in what that birthright consisted.

When the high privilege of preserving the national polity, civil and religious ; and of giving birth, in a direct line of family succession, to Jesse, to David, to Joseph the carpenter, and to Jesus Christ, was conferred on Judah ; what “ *birthright*,” what preeminence, what peculiar distinction could there be, in the great scheme of God’s dispensation to Abraham and his seed, which remained for *Joseph* ? Is this “ *birthright* ” to be found merely in the selection of Joseph, that the second of his sons should take the portion of the promised land, which was not required for the sacerdotal tribe of Levi ?

Was it, that he was preferred to Reuben, as the only one of his brethren, who should become the founder of two tribes in Israel ?

The emphatic manner, in which Joseph, and his sons Manasseh and Ephraim, are noticed in the Psalms, and other prophetic passages of holy writ, seems to indicate, that the “ *birthright* ” comprises some privilege and distinction superior even to this, which terminated, after all, in no temporal distinction or ascendancy whatever, as we have observed before.—What then was this privilege ?

There are two remarkable circumstances observable in the dispensations of Almighty God, in his selection of the patriarchal family. First, he appears to have

vouchsafed a preference of the younger to the elder sons ; and secondly, He seems to have chosen the barren wives, to become the mothers of those, whom he selected for some special distinction. " Sarai was barren." (Gen. xi. 30.) " Rebekah was barren." (Gen. xxv. 21.) " Rachel was barren." (Gen. xxix. 31.) Isaac, the younger son by the barren Sarah, was preferred to Ishmael the elder. Jacob, the younger of the twin sons of the barren Rebekah, was preferred to Esau. Joseph, one of the two youngest sons of Jacob, born of the barren Rachel, was preferred before all his brethren, to receive the birthright, forfeited by Jacob's first-born son Reuben.

Was this striking selection of the barren, to become mothers of the chosen seed,—of the younger, to take precedence of the elder born—(a transposition not only repugnant to modern custom, but clearly contrary to the usages of those very remote times)—was all this accidental ?

No ! In the counsels of the great Jehovah, and in his gracious scheme of salvation, to be offered to all the nations of the earth, this unusual selection indicated a design, which is now accomplished, and, therefore, clearly revealed. The prophetic vision of Isaiah penetrated, beforehand, the typical mystery of the barren mothers, and the younger birthright ; and he thus celebrates this peculiar dispensation.

" Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear ! Break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not

travail with child !”—Who were the barren, that bare no fruit as children of the only and true God ? The Gentiles ! all the nations of the earth, which were not of the stock of Abraham. But these are now to break forth into singing ; to cry aloud with exultation and joy—“ For more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.” (Is. liv. 1.)

Incalculably more in number shall the children of the living God be, which shall spring from the desolation of the idolatrous world, even than the children of his chosen people. If, in the Apocalyptic vision of Heaven, the thousands of Israel are represented as twelve thousand, multiplied by the number of the tribes, they who will be “ redeemed to God ” by the blood of “ the Lamb, that was slain,” out of *every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*,” will be as countless numbers ; as “ ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” And, when the high privilege and separation of Israel shall have ceased, on the full accomplishment of the great end for which they were appointed, the numberless progeny of her who had been barren, the Gentile world, shall be made, in their turn, though second born, “ Kings and Priests unto our God, and shall reign on the earth.” (Rev. v. 10.) The privilege of Israel was not, as they vainly imagined, an *exclusive* privilege, but one of the fullest comprehension. “ Blindness in part hath happened unto them,” by reason of

their "ignorance of this mystery ;" and will perhaps continue, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." "The olive-tree which is wild by nature," has been "grafted into the good olive-tree ;"—yet shall these, also, be ultimately "grafted into their own olive-tree ;"—"and *so*, all Israel shall be saved." "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Rom. xi. 24—26.) Thus, "shall enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews, from *another place*, though they and their Father's house may have been destroyed." (Esther iv. 14.) The temple, which the Angel, who held "a line of flax and a measuring reed in his hand," described to the prophet Ezekiel, was not a building of contracted dimensions. "There was an *enlarging*, and a winding about, still upwards to the *side chambers* : for the winding about of the house went still upward, *round about* the house ; The breadth of the house was still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber, to the highest." (Ezek. xli. 7.)

So, also, Isaiah calls on Israel to prepare ample space and room for that prodigious congregation, which shall attend "the Lord, the messenger of the covenant, when he shall suddenly come to his temple." (Mal. iii. 1.) "*Enlarge* the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations. Spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes ; For thou shalt break forth on the right

hand and on the left ; and thy seed shall *inherit the Gentiles.*" (Is. liv. 2, 3.)

Here then we find the true inheritance of the younger sons of the patriarchal stock, born of the barren mothers. This is their birthright—They shall inherit the Gentiles ! The barrenness of Sarai, of Rebekah, of Rachel, was typical of the desolate condition of the heathen world, lost in ignorance and dark idolatry.

But the reproach of these favoured women was taken away—"the barren woman was made to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children." (Ps. cxiii. 8.) God chose their sons, though second-born, that He might "set them with the Princes—even with the Princes of his people. (v. 7.) As] the sterility of the mothers was a symbol of the barren state of the heathen world, which travailed not with the children of God, until that Light arose, which lightened the Gentiles ; so was the absence of primogeniture in the selection of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, a symbol of the secondary position of the Gentile world in point of time, compared with that of God's first-chosen people Israel. The realisation of these two significant and prophetic symbols, is nothing less than the calling of the Gentile world to the knowledge and worship of the one only true God, by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.—"The Messiah"—("His Anointed,")—"the Shiloh," (whom he "sent.") This is the accomplishment of the grand and universal

scheme of redemption : it is the consummation of the Almighty's gracious dispensation of salvation towards all his human creatures.

The birthright of Isaac ;—the birthright, which Esau sold to Jacob ;—the birthright, which was transferred from Reuben to Joseph ; was their spiritual representation of Almighty God's free and gracious acceptance of the wild olive which he has grafted on the true olive.

Judah, as the genealogical root, represented God's eldest people the Jews ; and he was the stock from whence the Redeemer came according to the flesh ; “ and this genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.” (1 Chron. v. 1.) Joseph, as one of the two youngest sons of Jacob, by the barren Rachel, possessed the spiritual birthright, for he was the representative of God's younger family, the countless congregation of true believers in Christ Jesus, from all nations, which, in times of old, constituted the barren heathen world. In him, therefore, has his father Jacob's prophecy been fulfilled. For “ is God the God of the Jews only ? Is He not also of the Gentiles ? Yes ! of the Gentiles also.” (Rom. iii. 29.)

Ezekiel in the clearest terms applies to Joseph the glories of that birthright, which vested in him the privilege of being spiritually, by figure and type, the appointed stock, from which the blessing on Abraham should proceed, in its most extended sense ;

namely, in its application to "all the families of the earth."

B.C.
587. "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying,—Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, 'for Judah and for the children of Israel his companions.'" This stick represented the "tribe of Judah and his companions," namely the Benjamites, the Levites, and all who accompanied Judah after the Babylonish captivity; and who constituted the Jewish nation until the final destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Titus, at which period, in accordance with the prophecy of Jacob to Judah, "Shiloh" must have come.

But the prophet was ordered to take another stick—one of a far more extensive signification.

"Then take another stick, and write upon it, 'for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for *all* the house of Israel his companions.'" The first stick was exclusively for "Judah and his companions"—solely for the Jews, the stock from whence Messiah was to be born according to the flesh. The second stick was for *Joseph*, the stick of *Ephraim*, and for all the house of Israel his companions. Who then are "ALL the house of Israel?"

Are they merely the dispersed of the ten tribes? In this, as in many prophetic passages, the prophet was not, probably, himself aware of the full scope

and intent of that, which, under divine inspiration, he was commissioned to announce. The words, which he uttered, seemed perhaps, even to himself, to have no reference beyond the tribes of the dispersion. "The stick of Joseph," "and the tribes of Israel his fellows," who were to be "taken from among the heathen, whither they had gone," and to be "gathered on every side, and brought unto their own land," and to be "made *one stick*, with that of Judah, and to be made one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel, under one king;" (Ezekiel xxxvii. 16—22.) this stick of Joseph, thus destined to be again joined to that of Judah, seemed, probably, to the limited vision of the prophet, to have no wider signification, than the restoration of that chosen people, who were then in a state of apparently hopeless dispersion, and abandonment. It may be, that he did not consider, or comprehend the words, which Isaiah pronounced more than a hundred years before. "The Lord God, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, yet will I gather OTHERS to him, besides those that are gathered unto him"—therefore—"let not *the stranger* that hath joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, the Lord hath utterly separated me from his people; neither let the Eunuch say, behold I am a dry tree." "For thus saith the Lord unto the Eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and *take hold of my covenant*," "even unto them will I give in mine house

within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, which shall not be cut off." "Also *the sons of the stranger* that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him and to love the name of the Lord," . . . "*and take hold of my covenant*," "even them will I bring to my holy mountain," . . . "for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for *all people*." (Is. lvi. 3—7.) "All the house of Israel," then, are not to be looked for even among "the remnant of the Lord's people," whom "he shall set his hand again the second time to recover from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath and from the islands of the sea;" when "he shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." No! the "stick of Ephraim, and all the house of Israel, his companions, will comprise a more extensive fellowship than this. Before that day, when it shall come to pass that the Lord shall thus "set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant" of his ancient people, there will have been a "root of Jesse," an "ensign of the people," to which "the Gentiles will have sought," and whose "rest is glorious." It is because the stick of Ephraim represents this root of Jesse, in its application to the Gentile world; and because all the house of Israel comprises these Gentiles, that *then*

“the envy of Ephraim will have departed, and the adversaries of Judah will have been cut off; Ephraim will not envy Judah, and Judah will not vex Ephraim.” The Gentile stick of Ephraim will no longer envy the chosen stick of Judah, and that ancient stick of Judah will be no longer a vexation to the Gentile stick of Ephraim; “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God’s holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” (Is. xi. 9—13.)

Whether the prophet Ezekiel did, or did not consider “all the house of Israel,” in its full and complete comprehension, it was clearly so considered by one in later times, who was not less entirely a Jew than himself.

Saul of Tarsus, was “of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews.” (Phil. iii. 5.) His identity with the seed of Abraham was perfect. He was not a “proselyte of the gate” nor a “proselyte of Justice,” but an original Hebrew, of pure and unmixed descent, entitled to all the distinguished privileges of that people, if they were indeed, as they vainly imagined, the *sole* favoured and chosen people of God. “Are they Hebrews?” he says, “So am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.” (2 Cor. xi. 22.) Did then, this “Hebrew of the Hebrews,” this “Pharisee the son of a Pharisee,” (Acts xxiii. 6.) he, who “after the strictest sect of his religion, lived a Pharisee;”

(Acts xxvi. 5.) did he consider "all the house of Israel, confined to the *lineal* descendants of Abraham, whether in the line of Judah, or in that of Joseph? Far from it. He tells the Galatians—"know ye, that they, which are of *faith*, the same are the children of Abraham." "That the blessing of Abraham, might come on the *Gentiles* through Jesus Christ." "Ye are *all*" he says, "the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus." "Ye are *ALL one* in Christ Jesus; and if ye be Christ's, *then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*" (Gal. iii. 7—29.)

It was this, which formed the glorious theme of David's "new song"—"Sing unto the Lord, *all the whole earth.*" "Be telling of His *salvation* from day to day." "Declare His honour unto the *Heathen*, and His wonders unto *all people.*" "For the Lord is great and cannot worthily be praised, he is more to be feared than all Gods." "As for all the Gods of the Heathen, they are but idols; but it is the Lord that made the heavens." "Glory and worship are before him—power and honour are in his sanctuary." "Ascribe unto the Lord, *O ye kindreds of the people*; ascribe unto the Lord, worship and power." "Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his name; bring presents and come into his courts." "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; *let the whole earth* stand in awe of him." "Tell it out among the *Heathen* that the Lord is king; and that it is He who hath made the round

world so fast, that it cannot be moved ; and how that he shall judge the people righteously." "Let the Heavens rejoice, and let the *earth* be glad: let the sea make a noise and *all* that therein is." "Let the field be joyful and *all* that is in it, then shall *all* the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord."

"*For He cometh !—For He cometh ! to judge the earth : and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth.*" (Ps. xcvi.)

Great and glorious indeed was the privilege of Judah, for, "from him," was "*the genealogy*"—the house and lineage of David. But this high distinction was not "the birthright."

"The genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright." Forty-two generations accomplished the destiny of Judah. When Mary, the espoused wife of Joseph the son of David, had brought forth her son, and called his name Jesus, the prophetic privileges of Judah were finished.

But not so the birthright of Joseph, which is distinct, and separate from the genealogy. For the birthright we must contemplate the babe, (which was called Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins,) not in his swaddling-clothes, and in the manger of Nazareth, simply in his *birth*, as sprung from the stock of Judah ; but in the full exercise of his glorious mission upon earth. We must view him *accomplishing that law*, whereof the Lord had said, "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee."

We must view him in the waters of Jordan, when the Heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God descended like a Dove, and the voice from Heaven confirmed the prophetic song of his father David, saying, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased"—We must contemplate our blessed Lord, graciously dispensing the crumbs of the children's bread even unto dogs;—commending the faith, and granting the prayer, of the Canaanitish woman." (Matt. xv. 21—28.) We must hear his reply of condescending mercy to the remonstrance of his disciples, when "many publicans and sinners came, and sat down with him at meat." "They that be whole, need not a Physician; but they that are sick." "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice. I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Matt. ix. 13.) We must hear the words, which he addressed to the *centurion*. "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel; and I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. viii. 11.) We must hearken to the gracious voice, which called Zaccheus, the rich publican, the "man that was a sinner"—"to-day I must abide at thy house." "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." "For the Son of man is come, to seek and to save, that which was lost." (Luke xix. 1—10.)

It was on these occasions, that the dawn of Joseph's birthright appeared in the brightness of his coming—"a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel."—Then was his gracious "desire" accomplished unto the "King" of kings, upon "his holy hill of Sion,"—namely, "*the Heavens* as his inheritance; and the *utmost parts of the earth* for his possession." (Ps. ii. 8.)

That boundless inheritance is the birthright of Joseph—an inheritance comprising all God's people, redeemed by the precious blood of his dear Son.

Even "they that were some time *alienated*, and enemies in their mind by wicked works, are now reconciled," and constitute this great and glorious inheritance,—"*the inheritance of the saints in light, delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.*" (Col. i. 12, 13.)

Born, as we Christians are, of the barren Gentile world;—second in order to our elder brethren of the adoption;—yet were we marked, for the *birthright of Joseph, on the stick of Ephraim*, as essential parts of *all the house of Israel* his companions. For, "if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. iii. 29.)

In the worship of Almighty God Jehovah, now fully revealed as Trinity in person, but Unity in his eternal Godhead, there is but "one Nation" "upon the mountains of Israel." "One king, is king over all." Neither shall the Gentiles, who are

written on the stick of Ephraim, "defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things." The Son of "David is king over us and shall be our Prince for ever; and we have all one Shepherd;" who has given us "a covenant." (Ezek. xxxvii. 23—26.)

Thus, we find the true Shepherd of all the house of Israel—not (as the Jews imagined, to whom blindness in part hath happened) solely in the genealogy of Judah—as a "Shiloh," sent to them alone—as a "lawgiver," whose authority was to be confined "between the feet" of Judah. They looked for their Messiah to this genealogy alone, and as "anointed," in the pride and pomp of earthly sovereignty, to be "*King of the Jews.*"

It was because they so looked, that, when the Messiah was before them, they knew him not. A kingdom, which was not of this world, was beyond their comprehension. Their "rulers took counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed." (Ps. ii. 2.) When their heavenly "King appeared upon his holy hill of Sion," they mocked him, and spitefully entreated him. They saw not in the crown of thorns, which was placed upon his bleeding brow, "a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people." (Is. xxviii. 5.) They perceived not in the reed, which was placed in his hand, that "sceptre of righteousness, which is the sceptre of his kingdom." (Heb. i. 8.) And when

they clothed him with the scarlet robe of ridicule, they knew not, that he stood before them, " clothed with the garments of salvation," and " covered with the robe of righteousness," " to the end, that the Lord God might cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations." (Is. lxi. 11.) The limits of their own acknowledged period of prophetic time have been exceeded by more than eighteen hundred years; yet, " seeing they have seen, and not perceived; and hearing they have heard, and not understood." (Mark iv. 12.)

They comprehended not the words of the Lord, as spoken by the prophet Haggai; " I will shake *all nations*; and the desire of *all nations* shall come;" " and the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former:" " and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts." (ii. 7, 9.)

Thus, the genealogical descent of Christ from *Judah*, although it completely fulfilled Jacob's prophecy respecting him, was but an introduction to the great accomplishment of Joseph's birthright—the birthright of the younger sons of the barren Mothers—of all the house of Israel, marked on the stick of Ephraim, as his companions.

With respect to those privileges, which related to the Jews exclusively, as the genealogical root of the Messiah, *Judah* was the head. The name of his tribe stands first among those, from each of which twelve thousand were sealed in their foreheads as the

servants of God. In that passage, Joseph is ranked in his natural position amongst his own nation, as senior only to Benjamin. But *after this*—behold the inheritors of Joseph's spiritual birthright!—"a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." The great and glorious "birthright" of this universal family was nothing less than Christ—the true "Shepherd"—The "Shiloh," *sent* by the hands of "the mighty God of Jacob"—The "Stone of Israel"—"the Rock of our salvation."—That rock, alas! has been "a rock of offence, and a stone of stumbling," to the unbelievers of "both the houses of Israel." Upon it many have "stumbled, and fallen, and been broken, and snared." (Is. viii. 14.) Nevertheless, it is "the rock of ages of the Lord Jehovah"—"the rock, on which his universal church is built:" (Matt. xvi. 18): for, "that rock is Christ." (1 Cor. x. 4.) This rock is that "Stone, cut out without hands, which has become a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Dan. ii. 35.) It is that "Stone," which has been laid "in Zion, for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone." (Is. xxviii. 16.) That stone, which has been "disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious," (1 Pet. ii. 4.) "Even Jesus Christ himself, the chief corner-stone" of God's universal church. (Ephes. ii. 20.)

Conclusion of Jacob's blessing on Joseph.

“ Even by the God of thy Father who shall help thee, and by the Almighty who shall bless thee with blessings of Heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.”

“ The blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills ; they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.” (v. 25, 26.)

If then, the prophetic eye of the Patriarch beheld, in the fulness of time, that innumerable family, which was marked on the stick of his grandson Ephraim, for all the house of Israel his companions—well might he exclaim “ Joseph is a *fruitful bough*—even a fruitful bough by a well ; whose branches *run over the wall* ”—whose branches have passed over that wall of partition, which separated the stick of Judah from the stick of Ephraim ; and which, though sometime they grew “ afar off,” are now “ made nigh by the blood of Christ ; who is our peace, and hath made both one.” (Ephes. ii. 14.) Well might he describe the blessing of Joseph’s birthright as “ a blessing of *Heaven above* ”—“ a blessing of the *deep that lieth under* ”—a blessing which has “ ascended into *Heaven*, to bring down Christ from above ; ” and which has “ descended into *the deep*, to bring up Christ again from the dead.” (Rom. x. 6, 7.)

Well might he compare the blessing, which he pronounced, to “ blessings of the breasts and of the womb.” “ Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked,” (Luke xi. 27.) was the involuntary exclamation of one, who beheld that blessing, and “ heard the gracious words, which proceeded out of his mouth.” Through the dim vista of more than sixteen hundred years to come, Jacob in this prophecy beheld the immaculate birth of the favoured Virgin. To his prophetic eye, “ before she travailed, she brought forth ; before her pain came,

she was delivered of a man-child." Far off was then the period for the accomplishment of this blessing—for "shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or, shall a nation be born at once?"—Yet was the consummation not the less sure. "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord—Shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God."

Therefore at the time appointed, the whole Gentile world will "rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her"—"that they may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that they may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." (Is. lxvi. 7.—11.)

In a strain of joyful exultation, the aged father closes this blessing on his beloved son: and he seems to have recognised, in the peculiar and affecting incidents of that son's life, a type of the birthright, to which he was destined. Joseph had been "lost and was found." He had been long separated from his brethren; and had lived among the heathen in Egypt. In these respects the history of his life was an emblem of the Gentile world: and thus the Patriarch closes the most striking and beautiful of all the blessings, which he had pronounced upon his twelve sons.

"The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the *utmost bounds of the everlasting hills*. They shall be on the

head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was *separate from his brethren.*" (Gen. xlix. 26.)

Before we close these remarks on Jacob's blessing upon Judah and Joseph, it will be necessary to refer shortly to the parallel prophecy of Moses. Deut. xxxiii. 7.

"This is the blessing of Judah. Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and *bring him unto his people : let his hands be sufficient for him ; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.*"

Judah returned to the holy city, by decree of Cyrus, about 536 years B.C. The temple was finished "on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king." B.C. 515. (Ezra vi. 15.)

Though Judah had been among the most numerous of the tribes, his population had been sadly thinned during the captivity. "The whole congregation (says Ezra ii.) was 42,360"—so that, when the walls of Jerusalem were about to be rebuilt under the auspices of Artaxerxes, Sanballat, in his contempt for this diminished remnant of the Israelitish nation, exclaimed,—“What do these feeble Jews ? will they fortify themselves ? will they sacrifice ?—will they make an end in a day ? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish, which are burned ?” (Nehemiah iv. 2.) In the same contemptuous spirit, Tobiah the Ammonite boasted, “If a fox shall go up, he shall even break down their stone

wall." (Ibid 3.) "But God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19.)—"The sceptre was not to depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh should come." "The testimonies of the Lord, and all his commandments are sure."—So, when "Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, conspired to come and fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it," "Nehemiah" prayed unto the Lord, and he divided the people, so that, while half of the men were engaged in the building, the other half kept guard, and defended the wall. "He set the people, after their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows,"—exhorting them "to remember the Lord, which is great and terrible; and to fight for their brethren, their sons, and their daughters, their wives, and their houses:" (Nehemiah iv.) and God brought the counsel of their enemies to nought." Thus did the Lord—"hear the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people"—thus did he cause "*his hands to be sufficient for him:*" and thus was the Lord God "*a help to him from his enemies.*"

The blessing of Moses upon Joseph is in part almost a perfect parallel with that of Jacob. The same poetical figures, slightly transposed, denote the same events, of which they are the symbolical prediction. They shall thus be placed in juxtaposition.

THE BLESSING OF JACOB ON
JOSEPH.

Gen. xlix. 22—26.

Joseph is a fruitful bough ;
even a fruitful bough by a
well, whose branches run over
a wall.

The God of thy Father
shall help thee—and the Al-
mighty shall bless thee—with
blessings of Heaven above,—

Blessings of the deep that
lieth under ;—

The blessings of thy Fa-
ther have prevailed unto the
utmost bounds of the ever-
lasting hills.

They shall be on the head
of Joseph, and upon the
crown of the head of him,
who was separate from his
brethren.

THE BLESSING OF MOSES ON
JOSEPH.

Deut. xxxiii. 13—16.

And of Joseph he said,
Blessed of the Lord be his
land, for the precious fruits
brought forth by the sun.

Blessed of the Lord be his
land for the precious things
of Heaven—

And for the deep that
coucheth beneath.

And for the chief things
of the ancient mountains ;
and for the precious things
of the lasting hills.

Let the blessing come
upon the head of Joseph,
and upon the top of the head
of him, that was separated
from his brethren.

But, in this prophecy of Moses concerning Joseph,
there are other significant passages, strikingly appli-
cable to the view which we have been taking of the
glorious “ birthright ” to which he was destined.
“ Reuben was the first-born ; but his birthright was
given unto the sons of Joseph : the birthright was
Joseph's.” (1 Chron. v. 1, 2.)

Therefore does Moses, in the metaphorical lan-
guage of his prophecy, say of him, “ His glory is

like the *firstling* of his bullock." (Deut. xxxiii. 17.) The especial glory conferred on Joseph was this, namely that, although he was youngest but one of the twelve patriarchs, nevertheless a supremacy over the eldest born was conferred upon him. He was endowed with the high privilege of that glorious birthright, for which God's chosen people were appointed. Moses seems to have had some perception of this great mystery even at mount Horeb. Joseph he says is blessed "for the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush." (Ibid. 16.) Even then it appears to have been intimated to the shepherd of Midian, that Joseph was especially distinguished for some great end by "Him that dwelt in the bush" at Horeb—by the angel of the everlasting God Jehovah—of the God of his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—of the eternal I AM. Hence, contemplating with prophetic prescience the power of Joseph's exalted destiny, he says in the blessing before us, "His horns are like the horns of Unicorns." In similar language David exults in the 92nd Psalm. "My horn shall be exalted like the horn of a unicorn—for I am *anointed* with fresh oil," and why? Because he was the root from whence was to proceed the "Messiah"—the real "*anointed*,"—the real "horn of salvation raised up for us, in the house of his servant David," who "should visit and redeem his people," (Luke i. 68, 69.) by whom "the enemies of the Lord should perish, and all the workers

of wickedness be destroyed." (Ps. xcii. 9.) It is this great one and the same event, which, to David, of the house of Judah, in right of the genealogy ; and to Joseph, by virtue of the birthright, gave occasion to the figure, which is equally applied to both.

But this figure of "the horns of a unicorn," in its application to Joseph, is not used merely to signify in general terms, power or strength. It also points out distinctly the purpose for which that power and that strength were granted. "He shall *push the people together to the ends of the earth.*" (Deut. xxxiii. 17.)

As it is said also in the 22nd Psalm : "*All the ends of the world* shall remember, and turn unto the Lord ; and *all the kindreds of the nations* shall worship before him."

Finally, Moses points out, in this blessing with whom this immense congregation, collected from "the ends of the earth," are to be associated.

"They are the ten thousands of *Ephraim*, and they are the thousands of *Manasseh*." They are all the house of Israel, who were marked upon the stick of Ephraim for Joseph. For "thus saith the Lord God—Behold ! I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows : and I will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them *one stick*—and

they shall be *one* in mine hand." "And the heathen shall know that I, the Lord, do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore." (Ezekiel xxxvii. 19—28.)

SECTION XXII.

Benjamin.

Benjamin shall raven as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil. (v. 27.)

DEUT. And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of
xxxiii. the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and
12 the Lord shall cover him all the day long,
and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

SECTION XXII.

**General remarks on the prophecy of Jacob to Benjamin,
and on the birth-right of Joseph.**

Benjamin was the youngest of Jacob's sons, and was born of the barren, but beloved Rachel, who died after giving him birth, and "called his name—" Benoni" (the son of sorrow :) but his father called him Benjamin.") (the son of the right-hand.) (Gen. xxxv. 18.)

The wife of Jacob's earliest and deepest affections, to obtain whom he had served his father Laban many years, after a long period of sterility, presented him at last with two sons, and expired after giving birth to the second. With her last breath she gave him the name "Benoni"—the "son of pain and sorrow."—It might well have been imagined that a dying wish, under such affecting circumstances, would be held most sacred by the bereaved husband; and that Jacob would have adopted this touching memorial of her fate, which his wife with her parting breath had desired. There could have been only some very

powerful over-ruling consideration, which could have induced him to disregard a wish so expressed.

Yet Jacob *did* reject this expressive name, so calculated to excite his tenderest feelings of regret and pity, and called him "Benjamin," "*son of the right-hand.*" It was the desire of the Patriarch, by the name conferred on his youngest son, to preserve the memory, not of his beloved Rachel's pain and grief, but of her peculiar privilege, and dignity. She was his *right-hand*—and why? Because, after an apparent hopeless state of barrenness, it was she who was destined, by the Almighty disposer of events, to give birth to the two last of those twelve sons, who were to be the founders of the confederate nation of Israel. It was her destiny, to be the mother of the first-born of those two younger sons, and upon him that mysterious birth-right was conferred, which Jacob had himself obtained, by divine permission, from his brother Esau. Thus Rachel was, in truth, Jacob's "right-hand"—being the mother of him, who, instead of Reuben, was to inherit the birth-right.

The figurative language employed to describe the blessings of this birth-right, on the three several occasions, on which it was announced, is very similar. It was conferred in a spirit of prophecy by Isaac on Jacob; by Jacob on Joseph; and by Moses on Joseph. By Isaac, it is compared to "*the dew of heaven*" (that refreshing moisture which fertilizes the whole earth, and causes it to bring forth its fruits

in due season)—to “the fatness of the earth”—(that principle of fertility, which is not confined to one country, but pervades all the habitable globe,)—to “plenty of corn and wine,”—(that “wine, which maketh glad the heart of man”—not as a sensual stimulant alone, but by its refreshing grace, as a sacramental type of the precious blood of the New Testament, which has been “shed for many, for the remission of sins.”)—“That bread, which strengthens man’s heart”—(not as a nourishment to the body only, but as a sacramental emblem of that sacred body, which has been given for us.)

In like manner, Jacob pronounces upon Joseph “the blessings of Heaven above ;” and compares him to “a fruitful bough :” and Moses also describes the blessing of Joseph as distinguished “for the precious things of Heaven, for the dew ; and for the precious things of the earth, and the fulness thereof.”

Isaac, in blessing Jacob, says,—

“Let people serve Thee ; and nations bow down to Thee.” And Jacob declared that his blessing on Joseph, prevailed far beyond the confines of the land promised to his father Abraham and Isaac.—“The blessings,” he says,—“of *thy* Father, have prevailed above the blessings of *my* progenitors, unto the *utmost bounds of the everlasting hills.*”

Finally, Moses foretels, that the horns of Joseph “shall *push the people together to the ends of the earth.*”

These figurative expressions, applied to the birth-right, all concur in the representation of superabundant fertility, universal extension, and a free and bounteous dispensation of joy and gladness.

Thus, also, David in the 67th Psalm :—" Let *all the people* praise Thee, O God !"—" Then shall *the earth bring forth her increase* ; and God, even our own God, shall give us His blessing. God shall bless us, *and all the ends of the earth* shall fear Him."

The final increase and extension of God's true religion throughout all the earth, under the fertilizing influence of His grace, was the patriarchal birth-right. This glorious birth-right was taken from Esau the elder, and bestowed on Jacob, the younger son of Isaac. It was taken from Reuben, the eldest of Jacob's sons, and bestowed upon Joseph, the first-born of his two youngest by the barren Rachel. Its object was distinct from the mere genealogy of the expected Shiloh : for it was given—" *not unto Judah and his sons*, but *unto the sons of JOSEPH the son of Israel.*" (1 Chron. v. 2.)

Therefore, was the last-born son of her, who was mother of this birth-right, not called " Benoni," a " son of sorrow"—but " Benjamin," the "*son of the right hand*" of the promise.

The history of Benjamin, as Joseph's younger brother, accords with our general conceptions of such a position. His privileges were rather derivative, than primary. They had no reference to any peculiar des-

tiny of his own, but were dependent on his near connection with his elder brother. As their father Jacob had blessed Joseph, so did Joseph confer his own blessing on Benjamin. "He lifted up his eyes and saw Benjamin his mother's son, and said—God be gracious unto thee my son." (Gen. xliii. 29.) And, when his brethren feasted in his presence, Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. He ordered the silver cup to be placed in Benjamin's sack, that he might have a pretext for detaining him near his person. When he made himself known, "he fell on Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck." To his other brethren, he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment." (Gen. xlv. 14—22. These were all acts recognising the position of his younger brother as identical with, though secondary to, his own.

SECTION XXIII.

**The connection of Joseph and of the Hebrews, with
the conversion of the Gentiles.**

In the wonderful scheme of divine mysteries which the sacred records comprise, it is evident, that a prophetic meaning was attached, not to oral announcements only, but frequently to the occurrence of those events, which were directed by the providence of God. We find, in many of these *events*, types of Christ's future kingdom, and of the universal gospel dispensation, which are now fully revealed, though they were not, perhaps, discernible at the period, when the transactions themselves occurred. Many instances of this kind may be adduced.

The passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea was a type of the future Christian ordinance of baptism. St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, says—"Brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the

cloud, and all passed through the sea," "and were all *baptised* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (x. 12.) So also, he shews that the manna and the gush of water from the rock at Kadesh, were types of the Eucharistic sacrament. "They did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock" (the stone cut out without hands) "that *followed them*" (that came in the fulness of time long after their generation had passed away)—"and that rock was Christ." (1 Cor. x. 3, 4.) This was that "spiritual meat," which our blessed Lord identifies with himself—"I" says he, "am that bread of life"—"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead." The manna was but the shadow, Christ was the substance. "This is the bread, which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is *my flesh*, which I will give for the life of the world." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "Whoso eateth *my flesh*, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day." "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." "This is that bread that came down from heaven: not as your Fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." (John vi. 48—58.)

The typical application of manna and bread, (the sustenance of the body) to the word of Christ, (the spiritual sustenance of the soul) is strikingly set forth in the parallel passages—Deut. viii. 3, and Matt. iv. 4. "The Lord thy God suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna . . . that he might make thee know, that *man doth not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live.*" Our blessed Lord personally exemplified the same doctrine, quoting this passage in Deuteronomy—"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

We are thus instructed, both under the law, and under the gospel, that the most urgent necessities of the perishing body are of no account, when placed in competition with the spiritual wants of our immortal souls. So also, in John vi. 27, our Lord, alluding to his miracle of the loaves and fishes, exhorts his hearers to "labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat, which endureth unto everlasting life, which the son of God shall give."

In like manner, the bitter waters of Marah, which,

when the Lord shewed Moses a tree, were made sweet, after he had cast its branches into the water, —(Ex. xv. 25.)—and the waters of Jericho, which were healed, when Elisha cast salt into the spring, (2 Kings xi. 19—22.) seem to be types of that living water, on which our Saviour conferred a spiritual vitality, and of which he spake unto the woman of Samaria, that “whosoever drinketh thereof shall never thirst; but it shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.” (John iv. 14.) The salt also, which healed the waters at Jericho, seems to be significant of those holy evangelists, whom our Lord declared to be “the salt of the earth.” St. James seems to refer to the same images, when he says, “Doth a fountain send forth at the same place, sweet water and bitter?”—it cannot “yield salt water and fresh.” (Jas. iii. 11, 12.)

The number of the sons of Jacob, and the tribes of Israel, and the consequent numerous applications of this special number *twelve* to the circumstances commemorated in their history—as for instance the twelve wells at Elim (Ex. xv. 27.) the twelve pillars at Sinai, (Ex. xxiv. 4.) the twelve cakes of fine flour, to be placed on the pure table before the Lord; (Lev. xxiv. 5—8.) the twelve young men of Benjamin, and the twelve of the servants of David, whose combat is narrated in the second chapter of the second book of Samuel;—the twelve stones of Jordan, (Jos. iv. 20.) the twelve oxen of the molten

sea, (1 Kings vii. 25.) the twelve lions on Solomon's throne, (1 Kings x. 20.) the twelve rents in Jeroboam's garment,—Elisha's twelve yoke of oxen,—all these and many more, may have been designed as shadows, portending the number of those faithful men who were commissioned by Christ to be his apostles.

With a similar view perhaps, the "three-score and ten palm-trees" at Elim (Ex. xv. 27.)—the seventy elders of Israel—the seventy descendants of Jacob (Ex. i. 5.)—and the frequent application of this number to the events recorded in holy writ, may be figurative of "the seventy," whom our Lord appointed, and "sent two by two before his face, into every city and place, whither he himself would come." (Luke x. 1.)

But the incidents of Joseph's adoption in the land of Egypt; the settlement of his brethren and their families in that country, and their subsequent departure into Canaan; are events prophetic of the destined connection of Israel with the conversion of the heathen world to the worship of the true God. There is no reason to suppose, that Joseph himself perceived, in his remarkable destiny, as a distinguished resident in the idolatrous land of Egypt, a type of that birthright, which was to vest in him, and in his sons. When he said, "Take your father, and your households, and come unto me; and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat of the fat of the land," (Gen. xlv. 18.)—he spoke

only in reference to the immediate wants of those, who were so near and dear to him ; and to the providential circumstances of their unexpected interview. But we, on whom the ends of these things have come, can hardly fail to perceive the spiritual intent, and application of these *events*. The rays of prophetic light, which at first were scattered, are now brought, in the fulness of time, into one clear, and strongly-defined focus ; and the image is so apparent, that it seems obvious even to the most short-sighted. The patriarchal narrative, recorded in the 45th chapter of Genesis, is unquestionably interesting from its beautiful simplicity and pathos. But it is not for the amusement of our fancy, or for the gratification of our taste, or even of our curiosity in matters of historical research, that these most ancient records have been preserved, and handed down, to the remotest periods of time. They have a far higher object in view, than the mere entertainment of our vacant hours, the satisfaction of an inquisitive disposition, or the exercise of our ingenuity in their construction or interpretation.

Typical analogies, which are not authorised by scriptural interpretation, may be the subject of harmless, perhaps of useful, speculation ; especially when the analogies pointed out are striking. But it is the revealed word of God only, which can explain His revelation.

“ No prophecy of the scripture is of any *private*

interpretation ; " (2 Pet. i. 20.) " The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." " Spiritual things " can only be " discerned " by comparing them " with spiritual things." For " prophecy came not of old time by the *will of man*." Man was not the voluntary and spontaneous agent, *intentionally* foretelling future events in figurative language, or indicating them by sensible tokens and signs. But " holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The light, which they dispensed, was designed by God, to shine for a long period in a dark place, until the " day should dawn "—and the day-star should arise in the hearts of believers, " through the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. i. 19—21.)

Thus the typical signification of the frequently recurring numeral twelve, as applied to so many, and such various events in the Jewish history, could not have been comprehended, until the period arrived, when the Gospel was preached. It was a figure ascribed by the Jews, doubtless, to commemorate the number of their patriarchal progenitors. Whereas the number of their tribes, might have been itself a type of those twelve holy men, who were destined to " reveal that, which had been covered ;"—to " make known that, which had been hid ;"—to " speak in the light that, which had been told to them in darkness ;"—and, " to preach on the house-tops that, which their ears had heard in private." (Matt. x.

26, 27.) So, also, with respect to the "seventy," and the other prophetic figures, to which we have before referred. Thus it is, that the Israelites, and Joseph himself, were, probably, ignorant of the real intent, to be revealed in distant ages, for which the latter had been permitted by God to be sold by them into Egypt.

They saw not, in Joseph, his destined birth-right, the conversion of the Gentile world; nor did they perceive, in Pharaoh and his people, an emblem of the heathen nations of all the earth. But these national events, which were to them mere temporal incidents, affecting their worldly condition only, are to us as "a sure word of prophecy, whereunto we shall do well if we take heed." (2 Peter i. 19.) That these events were, in reality, prophetically figurative of the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge of the true God and his Christ, is no fancy of the writer of these pages. St. Paul appeals to the sacred records of this history, for the purpose of shewing the very same application, which we have been pointing out. In the 9th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, he reminds the Jewish converts of that announcement, which God caused to be made to Pharaoh by the mouth of Moses. "The Scripture," he says, "saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power." To what end? Was it solely that God's power might appear in the plagues which he inflicted on

Egypt ; or by the destruction of the King and his hosts in the Red Sea ? So perhaps thought the Israelites, and even Moses himself. But St. Paul has unfolded to us the gracious mystery, which was shadowed forth in the connection of the Hebrew people with the land of Egypt. It was the accomplishment of the birth-right of Jacob and Joseph, (which was also announced to Rebecca, when the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil," " it was said unto her,—the elder shall serve the younger,") " that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." " For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion, on whom I will have compassion." So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, (it is from no partial prerogative attached to a willing obedience to, and persevering continuance in the law,) but fully and freely " of God that sheweth mercy." (Rom. ix. 11—16.)

This universal grace is " the end of the law." It was this, which was signified by the residence of the Hebrews among the idolatrous people of Egypt. It is to this gracious scheme that St. Paul applies God's message to Pharaoh, and introduces that message, as a proof of the extension of God's free and saving grace to all the nations of the world. " For," he says, " the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I

might shew my power in thee, and that *my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*" "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Romans ix. 17.)

As the Lord, in the days of Moses, punished the idolatry of the heathen Egyptians, and hardened the heart of Pharaoh, while he extended his mercy and protection to his chosen people Israel, so, when the substance was accomplished, of which these events were the shadow, he has reversed the dispensations of his grace ;—insomuch that "the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith : " but "Israel, which followed after *the law* of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore ? because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the *works of the law*. For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone."

Thus has God "made known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory ;" "even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." "As he said also in Osee—I will call them my people, which were not my people ; and her beloved, which was not beloved." "And it shall come to pass, that in the place, where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people ; there shall they be called the children of the living God." (Rom. ix. 22—32.)

SECTION XXIV.

Continuation of the same subject.

As in the last period of Israel's connection with Egypt, St. Paul recognizes, in God's message to Pharaoh, a prophetic reference to the demonstration of his power, by the future declaration of his name throughout all the earth ;—(that is, to the calling of the Gentiles,)—so, also, in the earliest period of that connection, Joseph's address to his brethren points, though undesignedly perhaps, to the same grand consummation.

“ God sent me before you,” he says, “ to preserve you a *posterity in the earth* ; and to save your lives *by a great deliverance.*” “ So now it *was not you that sent me hither, but God.*” (Genesis xlv. 7, 8.)

If God's message by Moses to Pharaoh had, as St. Paul expressly affirms that it had, a secondary and prophetic reference to the conversion of the heathen world ; so it will hardly be a fanciful application of

Joseph's address to his brethren above quoted, but rather an application in harmony with the general scheme of scriptural revelation, to consider that address as also comprising a similar secondary and prophetic design. The envy and jealousy of Joseph's brethren were made subservient to the gracious purposes of God's providence. First, in a temporal sense, that the influence of their injured brother in Egypt might save these patriarchal founders of the tribes of Israel from destruction by famine : but secondarily, and prophetically, in a spiritual sense, "to preserve a posterity in the earth, and to save their lives by a great deliverance." For "upon Mount Zion shall be *deliverance*, and *there* shall be holiness" saith the prophet Obadiah, and upon that altar—"the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the *house of Joseph a flame*." And "to Jacob," and "to Joseph" (by virtue of his birthright) the house of Esau (the heathen) shall be "as stubble." "For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen ;"—"and *they shall be as though they had not been* : " "For Saviours shall come upon mount Sion, to judge the mount of Esau (the heathen) and the kingdom shall be the Lord's." (Obadiah 15—21.) So also Isaiah prophecies of the wicked—of those "that call evil good, and good evil ;" that "put darkness for light, and light for darkness ;" "As the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness." But he

adds—God “ will lift up an Ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth ; and behold they shall come with speed swiftly.” (Isaiah v. 20—26.) Thus, in the prophetic language of divine inspiration, denouncing, in its primary sense, the temporal judgments of God on the heathen, and also on his own apostate people ;—we, in the latter times, can clearly perceive the secondary purport of these prophecies, indicating the final calling of all the world to the knowledge and worship of Almighty God.

It seems, therefore, that the salvation of this comprehensive “ *posterity in the earth ;*” and the saving of their lives *by a great deliverance*, was shadowed forth in Joseph’s speech to his brethren : and therefore it is that under Divine Inspiration, he addressed them in these remarkable words—“ Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither : for God did send me before you *to preserve life ;* and God sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a *great deliverance.*”

That the conversion of the Gentile world through Christ, to the knowledge and worship of the only and eternal God, as Trinity in Unity ; and the ultimate incorporation of Jew and Gentile, in the true faith, as one fold under one Shepherd, were the great objects, for which the seed of Abraham were chosen—no Christian will question.

That the "Messiah," (the anointed of God ;) the "Shiloh," (the sent by God ;) the "Immanuel, (God with us ;)") the Redeemer, and Saviour, of the lost souls of fallen man ; was, by decree of prophecy, appointed to come, and did actually come, in the line of the tribe of Judah, is equally beyond dispute. That this *genealogy* was not the birth-right, which was inherited by Jacob from Isaac, we are distinctly told in the book of Chronicles. On the same authority, we know that it was transferred from Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob by Leah, to Joseph, the first-born of his two youngest sons by the barren Rachel. Although the sin of Reuben was the efficient temporal cause of his disinherittance, yet, it seems evident, that this result was preordained in the counsels of the Almighty, in accordance with the spiritual rule laid down by prophecy ;—" the elder shall serve the younger." This remarkable reversal of the ordinary privileges of primogeniture was primarily applicable to the selection of Jacob, as founder of the Israelitish nation, in preference to Esau, who was to be the founder of a distinct and separate people, having no direct connection with the promise made to Abraham. But St. Paul shews that, in its secondary and prophetic sense, it was intended to shew that the Israelites, though first called, were not, as they imagined, exclusively the chosen people of God ;—that their mere descent from Abraham, after the flesh, was not the true title to the real birthright ;—that it was not because they

were the children of Abraham by earthly descent, that they are children of God. "They, which are the children of Abraham, as children of the flesh," he says,—“they are not the children of God. But the children of the *promise* are counted for the seed.” (Rom. ix. 8.) He traces this promise as conferred first on the barren Sara, and her son Isaac. Thence on the barren Rebecca, and on the last-born of her twin sons, Jacob. The birthright, which was destined to proceed from Rebecca’s womb, was evidently foretold by divine inspiration, when “her mother and brother blessed Rebecca, and said unto her—Thou art our sister, be thou the *mother of thousands of millions*; and let thy *seed possess the gate of those which hate them*.”—(Genesis xxiv. 60.) Those “thousands of millions” were not the seed of Abraham, as children of the flesh, (as St. Paul declares;) but the children of the promise. And the children of the promise were those, who were ordained, in future times, “to possess the gate of those, which hate them”—as says the Prophet Micah, (i. 9.) “He is come unto the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem.”

Then was this accomplished, when the king, that came in the name of the Lord, proclaiming peace in heaven and glory in the highest, “wept over the City—saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now are they hid from thine eyes.” “For the days shall come upon thee, that thine

enemies" * * * * "shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke xix. 41—44.)

Thus, then, the preference of the last to the first-born was a figure, shewing forth that the elder, the Jews, who were first called to the worship of the true God, should serve the younger—the Gentiles;—to this great end;—that the Gentiles might attain to righteousness—the real, true, and only righteousness—the righteousness which *is of faith*. But Israel, which followed after the *law* of righteousness, should *not* attain it;—because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the *works of the law*." (Romans ix. 30—32.)

Thus, the precedence of the younger over the elder, in the attainment of true righteousness, was the birthright—not of the children of Abraham, after the flesh,—but of the children of the promise, represented by Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. These children of the promise constitute that innumerable family, predicted by the mother and brother of the barren Rebecca;—the thousands of millions, who should finally recognize in Sion that "stone, cut out without hands, which will become a great mountain, and cover the whole earth,"—that "*rock*, the rock of ages, on which God's church is built," and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail;—that rock,

which is "a sanctuary" to the children of the promise ; but "a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel ; and for a gin, and for a snare, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." (Isaiah viii. 14.)

SECTION XXV.

*The same subject illustrated by Jacob's blessing on
Ephraim and Manasseh.*

We have viewed the events of Joseph's history in Egypt, as part of the typical design, which shadowed forth that divine and gracious purpose, the calling of the Gentiles. We will proceed, in this section, further to strengthen this presumption, by additional circumstances, connected with the family history of this distinguished younger son of Jacob, in whom was vested the birthright of the promise.

After residing with his sons in Egypt during seventeen years, "the time drew nigh, that Israel must die." "And it came to pass, that one told Joseph, Behold thy father is sick. And he took with him his two sons, Manasseh, (the elder) and Ephraim," (the younger.) "And Jacob said unto Joseph—God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me"—and said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee; and I will make of thee a multitude

of people, and will give this land to thy seed, after thee." (Gen. xlviii. 1—4.)

So far, the blessing of God, on his favoured servant Jacob, might be confined to its primary and evident intention—namely, the future establishment of Jacob's descendants, as a confederate nation in the land of Canaan.

But the next words shew the secondary, spiritual, and typical intent of this blessing, which the patriarch probably did not comprehend, but which is equally clear to us, as the primary purport of the blessing was to him. "I will make of *thee* a *multitude of people*, and will give this land to thy seed after thee—FOR AN EVERLASTING POSSESSION." That the land of Canaan has not been an "everlasting possession" to the seed of Jacob, we, and they, in these days, well know. It is an "everlasting possession," not to the seed of Abraham after the flesh, but to the children of the promise, namely to the worshippers of God in Christ Jesus. The "everlasting possession" in the land of Canaan was not the inheritance of the "son by the bond-woman, after the flesh;" but of "the son of the free-woman by promise:"—it pertained not to "the covenant of Sinai in Arabia, which gendereth unto bondage, which answereth to the Jerusalem which now is, and which is in bondage with her children; but unto the Jerusalem which is above; which is free; and which is the mother of us all." (Gal. iv. 22—26.)

This is that "holy city" of which "he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars," spoke unto the angel of the church in Philadelphia—"Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he *shall go no more out*, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the *city of my God*, which is *New Jerusalem*, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him *my new name*." (Rev. iii. 12.) This new and glorified Jerusalem is the kingdom of "Him, that overcometh"—and who is he? "Jesus said, I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world—again, I leave the world, and go to the Father,"—"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, *I have overcome the world*." (John xvi. 28, 33.) In the glorious temple of this new Jerusalem, there will be a place for the faithful disciple, as well as for his Lord and master, "Him that overcometh" (that is, he that is faithful unto death) "will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out"—"To him" . . . "will I grant to sit with me in my throne, *even as I also overcame*, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. iii. 21.) St. John was "carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain,"—that great mountain, which in Daniel's vision, filled the whole earth; and there was shewn unto him "that great city the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God," "having the glory

of God. His light was like unto a stone most precious" (even that light which lightened the Gentiles)." "Her wall had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." (The twelve tribes are the *gates* by which the children of the promise have access to this heavenly city. That access is offered universally to all the four quarters of the world. For, "on the *east* there were three gates; on the *north* three gates; on the *south* three gates;" and (finally, the last discovered portion of the earth,) on the *west*, three gates. As these "gates," the introduction or access to the holy city, were distinguished by the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; so also "the wall of the city had twelve *foundations*, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb,"—the appointed founders of the Church of Christ. But in this new Jerusalem there was "no temple; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." The gates of this new city are ever open to all the inhabitants of the earth, who will not "defile it by working abomination, or making a lie" therein: for "the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: there shall be no night there, and the glory and honour of the nations shall be brought into it; all they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Rev. xxi. 10.) This is the "everlasting possession," in the land of Canaan, promised

to Jacob, to Joseph, and to the children of the promise, as their birthright.

Let us now proceed with Jacob's dying address to Joseph. "And now," he says, "thy two sons Ephraim, and Manasseh, (naming the younger first,) which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt" . . . "are mine," (they are Jacob's sons as children of the promise, and heirs of Joseph's birthright.) "As Reuben and Simeon," (the children of Abraham after the flesh) "they shall be mine." "As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me, in the land of Canaan, in the way, when yet there was but a little way, to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there, in the way of Ephrath," (Gen. xlviii. 5—7.) His beloved wife, the "right hand" of his destiny, as mother of the children of the promise, after giving birth to Benjamin, the next and own brother to Joseph, and thus identified with his privileges, died near to, and in the way of Ephrath. Where was *Ephrath*? Jacob tells us:—"The same" he says, "is *Bethlehem*." The last progenitor of the children of the promise was born at, or near to *Bethlehem*. Where was it, that David "found out a place for the temple of the Lord; an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob," who had made unto him a "faithful oath from which he would not shrink—of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat." He tells us, that he "heard of the same at *Ephratah*." (Ps. cxxxii. 5, 6, 11.) *Ephratah* which is

Bethlehem, is the seat of the birth-place of the promise—of the “Messiah”—of the “Shiloh.” So, also, spake the prophet Micah. “Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah—though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet, out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old—from everlasting.” There it was that “she which travaileth hath brought forth.” (Micah v. 2, 3.) Who is there that, collecting these scattered rays of prophecy, can doubt that they were then accomplished, when “Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the reign of Herod the King”—when Joseph “went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, into the city of David, which is called Bethlehem;” and while they were there, Mary brought forth her first-born son, whom angels announced to the shepherd, as “good tidings of great joy, to be a Saviour, Christ the Lord.” (Luke xi.)

“And Israel beheld Joseph’s sons, and said, Who are these?” “And Joseph said unto his father, they are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place; and he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.” “And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and lo! God hath *shewed me also* thy seed.” He had *not known* the gracious intent, with which God had permitted his beloved son to be sold into Egypt. He had considered him as lost for ever,—and now, he

not only beheld him, but also his seed—the inheritors of the birthright, the children of the promise. “And Joseph took them both—Ephraim (the younger) in his right hand, towards Israel’s left hand; and Manasseh (the elder) in his left hand towards Israel’s right hand; and brought them near unto him.” With what careful and minute particularity, is this described! There could be no mistake or error, as to the precedence of Manasseh over Ephraim, though “the eyes of Israel were dim for age.” But this was not to be so. For “Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim’s head, who was the *younger*; and his left hand upon Manasseh’s head, guiding his hands *wittingly*, for Manasseh was the *first-born*.” Here was a most remarkable application of the same great prophetic rule—“the elder shall serve the younger.”

It was the same rule, which gave to Israel himself the birthright of Esau; to Joseph the birthright of Reuben; and which was designed to distinguish, throughout the whole of this wonderful prophetic scheme, the children of the promise, from the seed of Abraham after the flesh. And thus did Israel proceed to bless Joseph, and to say:—“God, before whom my father Abraham and Isaac did walk; the God, which fed me all my life long unto this day; the *angel which redeemed me from all evil*; bless the lads: and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and

let them, (these children of the promise) *grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.*" We have seen that Joseph took every possible precaution to prevent any mistake, that might arise from the defect of his father's sight, to the prejudice of his eldest son Manasseh. He led Manasseh in his left hand, that he might be placed immediately opposite to Jacob's right hand; and, by leading Ephraim the younger, in his right hand, he placed him in the proper position, to receive the blessing from Jacob's left hand.

Yet, notwithstanding all this care, Jacob crossed his own arms, for the express purpose of defeating this arrangement. He stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was placed in front of his left; and his left hand on Manasseh's head, who was placed in front of his right,—“guiding his hands wittingly.” “And, when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; and he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head, (the younger) unto Manasseh's head, (the elder.)” And Joseph said unto his father, “Not so, my father, for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head.” “And his father *refused*, and said, *I know it* my son—*I know it.*” The elder represented the children of the bond-woman, Agar, “which is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is.” The younger represented the “children of the free-woman.”—“the children of the promise,”

the "free Jerusalem, which is above : and which is the mother of us all." (Gal. iv. 25, 26.) The prophetic rule must be carried out,—“The elder shall serve the younger.”

The privileges of the elder were undoubtedly vast, and most important—“He also shall become a people; and he also, shall be great : but truly, his younger brother shall be greater than he”—because “his seed shall become a multitude of nations.” (Gen. xlviii. 8—19.)

That the real intent of Joseph's birthright was not the mere inheritance by his sons, of a double allotment in the land of Canaan, is evident, from the slight importance attached to that event, when it is alluded to by Jacob at the close of this blessing. It is, as if he had said—“I have now pronounced the great purport of my spiritual blessing. I have confirmed on Ephraim that great decree, which the Almighty pronounced to my mother Rebekah, when I and my brother Esau struggled together in her womb. The Lord said unto her—“Two nations are in thy womb; and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other; and the *elder shall serve the younger*. This is God's design : and whatever may be its intent, I have now confirmed it in the persons of my two grandsons. Manasseh shall become a people, and be great; but truly, his younger brother shall be greater than he—because, by the

spirit of prophecy, I know that his seed shall become a multitude of nations. But there is yet a matter of less importance, a temporal destiny to be accomplished in favour of my son Joseph's descendants, and this also I will prophetically announce to them, before I die." Thus, as incidental to the conclusion of his blessing, "Israel said unto Joseph—Behold, I die; but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. *Moreover, I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite, with my sword, and with my bow.*" (Ibid. v. 21, 22.)

In adverting merely to the future territorial possessions of his son Joseph's tribes, Jacob does not even name his two grandsons, Manasseh and Ephraim. He addresses *Joseph* only—"Moreover I have given to *thee* one portion above thy brethren." Thus, the precedence in favour of the younger Ephraim, which he had so carefully marked in his blessing, was clearly not directed to any temporal or worldly superiority. The result shewed, that Ephraim was, in fact, far inferior to Manasseh as to extent of territory. Manasseh possessed the land of Gilead, beyond Jordan, to the northward of Gad: and also the district to the west of Jordan, between Ephraim on the south, and Issachar on the north, extending from the main river to the sea-coast. The portion of Ephraim was scarcely one third so large as that of Manasseh. It extended

from the plains of Jericho, on the east, to the vale of Sharon, on the west. Nevertheless, it clearly marked the spiritual purport of that priority, which Jacob had conferred on the younger of his two grandsons by his blessing. The country of Ephraim included both *mount Shiloh* and *mount Gerizim*. It connected, as it were, the sanctuary of the law with that other rival sanctuary, in which the first germs of Gentile conversion were faintly developed, after the captivity of Israel by Shalmaneser. It comprised that glorious "*birthright*" of Joseph, namely, the universal promise, through Abraham, to Gentile as well as Jew.

SECTION XXVI.

**The same subject further illustrated by Hosea and
Jeremiah.**

The selection of scattered scriptural testimonies, and the adaptation of their expressions to an argument, especially by an unskilful hand, will, it is to be feared, appear obscure to those, to whom the ideas, and the truths, which are intended to be illustrated, may perhaps, be new. We shall therefore disregard the imputation of needless repetition, or unreasonable length, and proceed to set forth a brief summary of the points, which we have endeavoured to enforce, with a view to render our meaning as clear as our faculties will allow. It has been our object to shew

1st,—That the prophecies, contained in the sacred records of scripture, are sometimes direct in the terms by which they are expressed, (or didactic); and at others typical, or signified by emblematical figures: also, that both of these modes of expression

are frequently intended to bear a secondary as well as primary application.

2ndly.—That types are intended to be conveyed, not only by figures of speech, but by recorded *circumstances* and *events* :—as in the instances we have adduced analogous to the number of the Apostles, and the seventy disciples; and especially the two sacraments of baptism, and the Lord's supper: the two latter of which, are clearly so referred to by the Apostle Paul.

3rdly.—That the connection of Joseph, as heir of the birthright and the promise, with the heathen land of Egypt, is a prophetic type, conveyed by actual events and circumstances, of the final calling of the Gentile world (by means of the old covenant) to the new covenant of faith in the true God of Israel, through Christ, his Messiah. In confirmation of this, attention has been called to the ninth chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans. There, the message of God by Moses, to Pharaoh, which in its primary sense clearly refers to the destruction of that king and his people, by the plagues of Egypt, and the submersion of their hosts in the Red Sea, is ascribed by the apostle, in its secondary and prophetic sense, to the demonstration of the power of God by the future declaration of his name throughout all the earth. The inference, which the apostle draws from this gracious dispensation, so prefigured and predicted by the message of God to Pharaoh, is

this—namely, that they are not all the children of God, who are merely the seed of Abraham, after the flesh: but, that the true seed is called in *Isaac*—thus, that the children of the promise are they, who are counted for the seed by God's free grace, according to his own good pleasure in shewing forth his mercy.

Finally, St. Paul enforces that important doctrine, that this seed of the promise comprises all those, Jews as well as Gentiles, who follow after the righteousness which is of *faith*: but that even Israel, though born of the seed of Abraham, cannot attain to the true law of righteousness, so long as they seek it, not *by faith*, but by the *works of the law*.

We cannot bring our remarks on this subject to a close, without introducing one additional prophecy. That, to which we are about to advert, is perhaps the most clear, and the most striking, of all those, which, in a primary sense, apply to the national events of Israel, in their connection with Egypt; and, secondarily, to the advent of the Messiah.

Hosea flourished 740 years B. C., and about the same number of years after the Exodus. In the book of his prophecy, it is thus written, (chap. xi. 1—4.) “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” “As they called them, so they went from them.” “I taught *Ephraim also* to go.” (Both were called out of Egypt—namely Israel, the children of Abraham,

after the flesh ; and also Ephraim, the *younger* son of Joseph, who represented the children of the promise.) “ I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love ; and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws.” (So, according to the primary signification of this prophecy, the Lord declares, Lev. xxvi. 13.) “ I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth, out of the *land of Egypt*, that ye should not be their *bond-men* : and I have broken the band of your yoke, and made you go upright.” And so also, in its secondary sense, St. Paul says to the Galatians, (chap. v. 1.), “ Stand fast therefore in the *liberty*, wherewith Christ has made us *free* ; and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” The secondary application, which the Apostle here expounds, clearly shews the typical and prophetic intention of the prophecy, in its primary sense. The bondage of Egypt was a type of that of the law. The deliverance from the first prefigures the great final deliverance from the latter. But the Jews, who, with willing servility, obstinately retain their first bondage, can have no part in that gracious deliverance, by which Christ has offered freedom to all. “ Christ has become of no effect to ” those, “ who are justified by the law ”—they “ are fallen from grace.” “ For in Jesus Christ, neither *circumcision* availeth anything, nor *uncircumcision*. (There is no partial preference, either of *Jew* or *Gentile* : but that only availeth to salvation, which

is of "*faith*," which worketh by love." Gal. v. 4, 5.)

But, to proceed with Hosea—

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." The primary sense here is simply the Exodus. But the secondary sense is that far more important event, of which the first was but a type, and which was accomplished, when "Joseph took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt," "and was there until the death of Herod," expressly that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, "out of Egypt have I called my son." (Matt. ii. 14, 15.)

We find Egypt, and also Assyria, the two neighbouring countries to Palestine, frequently used in scripture prophecy to denote the heathen world. Thus Isaiah, "The burthen of Egypt! *Behold the Lord*" . . . "*shall come into Egypt.*" (Here is again a similar prophecy to that of Hosea, fulfilled as stated by St. Matthew.) "The idols of Egypt shall be moved *at His presence*, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it." "The land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt." "In that day, five cities in the land of Egypt shall *speak the language of Canaan*, and *swear to the Lord of Hosts.*" "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord." "And it shall be for a sign, and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. For they shall cry unto the

Lord because of the oppressors, and *He shall send them a Saviour, and a great One, and He shall deliver them.*" "And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day." (Is. xix. 1, 17—21.)

But the son which is called out of Egypt, will "fill the valleys, and make low the hills;" will "straighten the crooked, and make the rough ways smooth," not, literally, to Egypt only, but to the whole Gentile world. Therefore, Assyria is referred to, as well as Egypt. "In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to *Assyria*. And the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians." "In that day shall *Israel* be the *third* with Egypt and with Assyria," (the Gentile world will far preponderate over the Jews, who embrace the faith of the gospel) but these few of faithful Israel will be "even a blessing in the midst of the land," "whom the Lord of hosts shall bless—saying, blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria, the work of my hands, and Israel, mine inheritance." (Is. xix. 23—25.) Thus, finally, "when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," "all Israel shall be saved." (Rom. xi. 25, 26.)

Thus, we have the whole grand scheme complete ! the great end achieved ! the universal confederacy in the faith of the Gentile and the Jew ! We have before us, as it were, "the stick of Judah, and the

children of Israel his companions : and, for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and all the house of Israel his companions." (Ezek. xxxvii. 16.)

It was with a secondary prophetic view to this consummation, as we are assured by St. Paul, that God caused it to be said to Pharaoh—"In very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power ; that my name may be declared in *all the earth*." To this end, also, it was, that "Joseph was sent before his brethren into Egypt, to *preserve life* ; and to save their lives by a *great deliverance*. And so, it was not his brethren that sent him thither, but God." It was God, who sent him thither as the fore-runner of that eventful period, which should come to pass in the fulness of time, when, as the Lord spake by his prophet Jeremiah, "Behold ! I will raise unto David a *righteous Branch*, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment, and justice in the earth. In *his days Judah shall be saved*, and *Israel shall dwell safely*," (not, certainly, as the children of Abraham after the flesh—not in the sense of their national polity, as the Jewish people ;—but so many, as should prove to be the children of the promise by faith in Christ. For, though the saying of Esaias the prophet was fulfilled—"Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?"—Though, as a nation, "the eyes of the Jews are blinded, and their

hearts hardened," nevertheless, even "among the chief rulers also many believed on him." (John xii. 38—42.) Though, by the perfect prescience of the Almighty, the rejection and crucifixion of his blessed son by the Jews was essential, as the efficient mode, by which alone, an atonement could be accepted by him; still, "it is necessary," said Paul and Barnabas, addressing the Jews, "that the word of God should *first have been spoken to you*: but seeing ye put it from you," "lo! we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts xiii. 46.) It was as children of the promise, then, that "Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely." "And this is the name, whereby he (the Messiah)—shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." "Therefore, behold! the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. (The shadow disappears when the substance is realized.) But the Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from *all countries, whither I had driven them.*" (Jer. xxiii. 5—8.) "Hath God cast away his people?" says St. Paul, "God forbid. God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew." Even at the time, when the "Righteous Branch" was manifested; though the Jewish nation, generally, were stupified with the "spirit of slumber; having eyes, that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;"—never-

theless, as, in the days of Elias, "there were seven thousand men, who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal,"—so, at the advent of the Messiah, also, there was found "a remnant, according to the election of grace." (Rom. xi. 1—8.) Moreover, the prophets, and the apostle of the Gentiles, bear witness, that the time will come, when, under the shadow of that "Branch"—"the Lord our righteousness"—"Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely."

"Thus saith the Lord God," saith Ezekiel, "I will bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon *the whole house of Israel*, and will be jealous for my holy name : " "after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me" "when I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations." "Then shall they know, that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen : but I have gathered them into their own land, and have left none of them any more there." "Neither will I hide my face any more from them ; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." (Ezekiel xxxix. 25—29.)

So, St. Paul says that, though they have stumbled, they have not irrecoverably fallen, "but, rather,

through their fall, salvation is come unto the Gentiles." Therefore, he adds, "if the fall of them be *the riches of the world*; and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; *how much more their fulness.*"

"For, if the casting away of them be *the reconciling of the world*; what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" The chosen people of God cannot be finally divested of that holy character, with which he first endowed them. Of their first holiness we "are now partakers." For, if the *first-fruit* be holy, the *lump is also holy*: and if *the root* be holy, so are *the branches.*" And if alas, the original "branches be broken off," and we, "being a wild olive-tree, are grafted in among them; and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive-tree"—we have no ground for boasting; but we should remember, with all humility, "that we bear not the root, but the root us." "Because of *unbelief* they were broken off;" and we only "*stand by Faith.*" "If God spared not the natural branches"—how ought we to "take heed lest he spare not us." "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: "on them which fell, severity; but towards" us, "goodness; if we *continue* in his goodness—otherwise, we also shall be cut off." "*And they, also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in.* For God is able to graff them in again." Thus "blindness in part only hath happened unto Israel,

until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." "And so *all Israel shall be saved* ! As it is written—there shall come out of Sion the deliverer ; and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob : " "for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." "As concerning the gospel they are (still alas) enemies for our sakes : but, as touching the election, (the sure and stedfast calling of their Father Abraham) they are beloved for their Father's sakes." "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." "For, as we, in times past, did not believe God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief ; " "even so have these, also, now not believed, that, through our mercy, they also may obtain mercy." "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Romans xi. 11—32.)

Then will the words of Jeremiah be most amply fulfilled—"In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely." Then will that "chosen generation" perceive and confess, in its full and universal extent, the real blessing pronounced on all the families of the earth, through the seed of their Father Abraham.

Then will they know, that righteousness is not to be attained under the yoke of legal bondage, of which their temporal yoke in Egypt was a type : but, that it can be attained only through the free grace of that righteous Branch, whose perfect righteousness must

be *imputed* to us—who is, at once, our Lord, and “our Righteousness.” Then shall they no more say—“The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. But the Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them.” (Jer. xxiii. 5—8.) Then will they comprehend God’s message to Pharaoh—“In very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and *that my name may be declared in all the earth.*” Finally, they will perceive, why it was, that Joseph was sent before his brethren into Egypt;—namely—“to preserve life; and to save their lives by *a great deliverance* ;” and thus it was not his brethren “that sent him thither, but God.”

And now, how can we more appropriately close these remarks, on this glorious consummation of all the law and the prophets, than by an earnest prayer that the Almighty Jehovah may, of his gracious mercy, shorten the days of his people’s captivity under the bondage of the law.

God grant, that they may speedily be admitted, “to stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free.” May they see, and confess, that “Christ is become of no effect unto whosoever are justified by the law—they are fallen from grace.” But may they, “through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith”—forasmuch as—“in

Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love." (Gal. v. 1—6.) Then will Jew, as well as Gentile, as one fold under one Shepherd, join the blessed Apostle Paul in his devout exclamation of rapture—"O! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, and who hath been his counsellor?" "or *who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again!*"

(Who indeed shall presume to call the Lord his debtor for works of the law which he has performed? He, and He only, is our righteousness. For) "of *Him*, and through *Him*, and to *Him* are all things. To whom be glory for ever. Amen!" (Romans xi. 33—36.

SECTION XXVII.

**Jacob's prophetic address to Benjamin, and the blessing
of Moses on his tribe.**

We have, at some length, endeavoured to shew the very important prophetic character, in which Rachel, as the mother of Joseph, the heir of the promise, was "the right-hand" of Israel. The whole scope of the Almighty's gracious scheme of redemption is now so far accomplished, that we can clearly perceive, why Jacob preferred the name of Benjamin (the son of his right-hand,) to that affecting term, which Rachel herself bequeathed to her last-born son with her dying breath—namely "Benoni"—(the son of pain and sorrow.)

In Benjamin, personally, we contemplate little more than the privileges, which he derived from his birth, as own brother to Joseph. Nevertheless, like all the other sons of Jacob, he is made the subject of a figurative prediction by his Father. "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf. In the morning, he

shall devour the prey ; and at night, he shall divide the spoil." The accomplishment of this will, probably, be found in the temporal incidents, which attach to the history of Benjamin's tribe in the land of Canaan. There is no figure, which can represent more strikingly, fierce, insatiable, and merciless brutality, than that, which Jacob adopted, to indicate the future crimes of Benjamin's posterity. They were to "to ravin, as a wolf." The prey was to be devoured, and the spoil *divided*." The enormities, perpetrated by the "sons of Belial," who were men of Gibeah, which belongeth to Benjamin, exceeded, in atrocity and abomination, the conduct of the inhabitants of Sodom against Lot, to which they bore a very remarkable analogy. The account of these abominations is recorded in the 19th chapter of the book of Judges.

The wretched victim of their violence and cruelty, the prey, whom they had devoured,—was literally *divided* by the Levite, with whom she lived, in consequence of their atrocity, into "twelve pieces," and sent, as a testimony of their horrible outrage, "into all the coasts of Israel."

This unspeakable crime may well have been denounced, before hand, in the spirit of prophecy, by Jacob ; as, in the instances of Simeon and Levi, he had declared, that "instruments of cruelty were in their habitations, and that, therefore, he would divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel."

But, though the sentence of Jacob upon Benjamin seemed to refer to the temporal crimes, which should be perpetrated by that tribe : and was rather a denunciation than a blessing ; still, as the son of Rachel, and the brother of Joseph, he was identified with their spiritual and prophetic blessings. These, although not noticed by his Father, are the subject of the blessing by Moses in the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy. “ And of Benjamin he said, the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him ; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.” The horrible iniquities, to which we have referred, were visited by the just retribution of God’s vengeance. At the battle of Gibeah, the Israelites “ inclosed the Benjamites round about, and chased them, and trod them down with ease. So that all, which fell that day, of Benjamin, were twenty-and-five-thousand men, that drew the sword. And the men of Israel turned upon the children of Benjamin, and smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of every city, as the beasts, and all that came to hand : also they set on fire all the cities that they came to.” (Judges xx.)

But, it was not to be, that “ one tribe should be lacking in Israel.” “ The children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, there is one tribe cut off from Israel this day ! ” So severe had been the chastisement,—so complete the judgment executed upon Benjamin, that their women

were utterly destroyed ; and " Israel had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife." Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing that the women are destroyed out of Benjamin. Howbeit, we may not give them wives of our daughters, for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he, that giveth a wife to Benjamin." To prevent the entire destruction of Benjamin's tribe, the elders of Israel instigated, and connived at, the forcible seizure by the Benjamites of the *daughters of Shiloh*, when they came forth, to dance at the yearly feast of the Lord. " So the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught. And they went, and returned to their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them." (Judges xxi.)

Thus, the tribe of Benjamin, having expiated their crimes by suffering a punishment, which threatened the entire extinction of their race, became, as it were, purified, and renewed by an alliance with the daughters of "*Shiloh*."

As Jerusalem was the seat of the *temple*, and of the kingdom of the tribe of *Judah*, by virtue of their privilege, as the root of Messiah's genealogy—so Shiloh was the seat of the *tabernacle*, in the portion of *Ephraim*, by virtue of Joseph's birthright of the promise. Consequently, there could be no connec-

tion more appropriate than the alliance of the daughters of Shiloh, of the tribe of *Ephraim*,—the direct descendants of Joseph, with the tribe of *Benjamin*, his own brother.

The tabernacle of God, also, had been established in the midst of the land, allotted to Ephraim's tribe. Thus, the high privilege of Joseph's spiritual birthright of the promise was, ostensibly, manifested in the sight of all the congregation, by their connection with the holy Tabernacle, during the early integrity of Israel's national confederacy. But, under the kings of Judah, the defection of Israel, and the final separation of the ten tribes, occurred. The sensible and apparent glory of Ephraim then departed. "So that God forsook the tabernacle in Shiloh ; even the tent which he had pitched among men." "He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim : " "but chose the tribe of Judah, even the hill of Sion which he loved. (Psalm lxxviii. 60, 67, 68.)

From that time, the ostensible preeminence of Judah, as the genealogical root of the Messiah, was established, until the first advent. "The sceptre was not to depart from him, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh should come." The birthright of Joseph remained, as it were, in abeyance ; for it could not take effect, until the destiny of Judah should be accomplished.

In the meanwhile, the just judgments of God upon

the iniquities of his ungrateful people, while they exercised their full effect of chastisement for sin, did not interfere with, or prevent His immutable decrees. The instruments which He chose for the carrying out His gracious purposes, could not prejudice the final accomplishment of those purposes, by means of their own agency, even while they forfeited all the concurrent privileges, which might have attached to their high calling. God works out his own great designs even by those whom he rejects on their own account. "He hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise ; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty : " "and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen ; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are ; " "That no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. i. 27—29.) Thus Ephraim and Manasseh remained, apparently, in a lost state among the captivity and dispersion of Israel. Yet, by means of Benjamin, the blood of Ephraim, through the daughters of Shiloh, still possessed its share in the national representation of God's chosen people. Benjamin never deserted Judah. He remained faithful, when the ten tribes revolted against Rehoboam ; and, returning from the captivity of Babylon, Benjamin constituted, with Judah and the Levites, the Jewish nation under the second Temple, until the advent of our Lord. As the youngest son of Rachel, (the right hand of

Jacob,) and as brother of Joseph, and as descendant also of Ephraim, through the daughters of Shiloh, the tribe of Benjamin retained a most important and significant position in the grand Patriarchal and Prophetic scheme. Though, after the dispersion of the ten tribes, the sensible presence of Ephraim and Manasseh was no more :—yet the representation of their destiny was constantly upheld by Benjamin and associated with that of Judah.

Throughout these remarks, we have considered God's gracious purpose—of calling the Gentiles into his flock to have been the spiritual birth-right of Joseph. It is a most remarkable circumstance, that Paul the apostle, who was especially called for the conversion of the *Gentile* world, was of the tribe of *Benjamin*. In his veins flowed the blood of the daughters of Shiloh, of the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph, on whom was conferred the birth-right of the promise. In him, therefore, we see the representative “for Joseph of the stick of Ephraim, and *all* the house of Israel his companions.” In St. Paul's veins also flowed the blood of Benjamin—the youngest son of the barren mother—the last-born of Rachel, who was not to be called the son of sorrow, but the son of Israel's “right hand !” It is thus, that he announces his own genealogy to the Roman converts—“I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of *the tribe of Benjamin*.” And he adds—“I speak to you Gentiles ; inasmuch as I

am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office." (Rom. xi. 1, 11.) This Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the *tribe of Benjamin*, was the "chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel;" (Acts ix. 15.)—that is, to bear "for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and *all* the house of Israel his companions:" viz., "the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel"—the "one fold under one Shepherd!"

The apostle Paul seems, as it were to be the very point of focal concentration, in which the prophecies which we have been considering, whether by direct announcement, by type and figure, or by events and circumstances, have met together. If we have been graciously led into a right view of these things, we shall understand, in the history of the tribe of Benjamin: in its origin from Rachel; in its alliance with Ephraim; in its fidelity to Judah; and finally, in its representative, the great apostle of the Gentiles; the application of the blessing by Moses—when, "of Benjamin he said—The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders." "He shall dwell in safety"—for even the iniquities of his tribe should not cause its utter extinction. The Lord should "cover him all the day long;" for, he should be partaker with Judah of the divine protection, throughout all the political defections, calamities, and dispersions, of his nation.

“ He shall dwell between his shoulders ;”—between those two main supporters, divinely appointed to be the props of that “ building of God—an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ” (2 Cor. v. 1.)—between the shoulders of Judah on the one hand, and of Ephraim on the other : participating in the temporal destinies of the former, and the spiritual privileges of the latter.

SECTION XXVIII.

**Remarks incidental to the prophetic blessing of Jacob
on his twelve sons.**

The view, which we have taken of the prophetic blessing pronounced by Jacob on his twelve sons, leads us to reflect on the general scope and intention of the Old Testament, which comprises the covenant of *works*: and the New Testament which is the covenant of *grace*.

We shall find, that the latter, (the covenant of grace) though last in order of time as to its completion, is clearly indicated, as the primary object in conception, and the ultimate object in consummation, when we contemplate the revealed counsels and designs of Almighty God. Attention to the early period of scripture history will make it apparent, that the gospel covenant of grace was a design clearly foreshewn by prophetic types, even before the appointment of Abraham's seed as the instrument and

means by which this great and gracious end was to be brought about.

There have been, and there still are, two conflicting systems in the relation of man to his Almighty Creator. The one is *Idolatry*,—an ignorant worship of the unknown creative and preservative principle, by means of certain objects or figures, which are supposed to personify, and sometimes actually to embody, this mysterious principle itself. To this kind of spurious adoration, there is also joined an abject dread of calamities, which this great principle may inflict in its displeasure; or which some other opposite and evil principle may occasion, for the gratification of its own malice. The latter is attempted to be propitiated by sacrificial, impious, and horribly superstitious rites.

The opposite system to the above, is the knowledge and worship of the Creator, as he has revealed himself to mankind from the beginning of time: the truths of which revelation have been handed down by tradition, and subsequently fixed in those written records, which the descendants of Abraham were specially appointed, as a peculiar people, to arrange and preserve, first for their own instruction, and subsequently for the instruction of all mankind in future ages to the end of time. This revelation is in its nature two-fold. It comprises a series of historical facts; and also successive confirmations, by means of prophecy and its fulfilment, whether

such prophecies be by direct announcement, or by typical events and circumstances.

In the scheme of revelation, the mode frequently adopted for the instruction of man is—that of representation, or example,—that is to say, the setting forth a part to signify the whole. Thus, *Idolatry* is represented by the Canaanitish nations; and the displeasure of God against that principle is marked by the judgments which were inflicted on those countries.

The Hebrews represent the other principle,—the knowledge and worship of the true God. They demonstrate the complete separation of religious truth from religious error: the incongruity of the one with the other; and their history illustrates the judgments, which have been inflicted, and the triumphs, which have been achieved, by the former over the latter. This separation from, and this warfare with, *idolatry*, constituted the first step in that progressive path towards the consummation of God's gracious designs towards his creatures, which was marked out for the children of Israel. They prepared the way for that numerous host, of which "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed." (Jude 15.)

But the natural infirmity, which attaches to all mankind; the vicinity and example of idolatrou.

nations; the temptations and corruption, which were certain to proceed from an intercourse with the heathen, especially by conjugal alliances; all these considerations rendered it necessary that they, who were trustees of the sacred deposit of divine truth, should be protected against these dangers, and upheld in the persevering and constant guardianship of the precious trust which had been confided to them. For this purpose, primarily, they were enjoined to maintain the most rigid separation from their idolatrous neighbours. They were also subjected to a minute system of ceremonies, fasts, and sacrifices, the observance of which was centralised at a particular place appointed for their celebration, under the ministration of a standing and hereditary priesthood. At this place, the Deity himself, by a mysterious manifestation of his word, vouchsafed to sanction the ordinances which he had commanded. This place, or sanctuary, was the moveable tabernacle during the Exodus;—the stationary tabernacle at Shiloh during the early confederacy of the tribes; and the temple at Jerusalem under the kings of Judah, and the Asmonean and Herodian princes. But to many of these ceremonies, sacrificial and sacramental; to many of the events and circumstances which occurred in connection with the history of this people; and, especially, to many of the announcements which holy men were divinely inspired to utter; there were vast secondary objects assigned. These could only be developed by

their obvious fulfilment, in the course of those future revelations, which, though concealed at first in the womb of time, clearly shewed, at last, that the Hebrews were called, not with a view to any partial dispensation, but for the final salvation of all mankind. The Almighty had declared to Abraham, "In thy seed shall *all* the families of the earth be blessed." The observance of these ceremonial laws, and others of a moral kind, had been exacted by God with the utmost strictness. An obedience to them was rewarded; and their infringement was visited with the severest chastisements.

We are now led to the consideration of two other conflicting principles in the relation of man to his Almighty Creator, namely:—"Sin and Righteousness."

A perception of these two opposing principles, was the fruit of "the tree of knowledge." Before our first parents had partaken of that fatal fruit, they knew no "evil." They were formed in the image of God, with his attributes of righteousness fully imputed to them, on condition of faith in Him, shewn forth by obedience to his one injunction, to abstain from that dangerous fruit. They knew not the nature of "evil;" and therefore they assumed no claim to personal merit. Their condition was that of perfect innocence, adoring, and trusting in, their Almighty Creator, and bountiful benefactor.

After their fall, the state of man became completely reversed. Sin constituted his essential cha-

racteristic. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. vi. 5.) It became necessary, therefore, to establish a law, in the perceptions of his mind, and by positive precept; by which the knowledge of "good and evil," which had occasioned the fall of man, might nevertheless be forced, as it were, from a wrong into a better direction.

"Sin is the transgression of this law." (1 John iii. 4.) It is the transgression of "the law," whether human or divine. If there had been no "law," neither could there have been any consciousness, or living perception of sin in the human mind. We should have been so utterly depraved as not to have perceived any distinction between sin, which had been acquired by the fall; and righteousness, which was lost by it. The rule would have been wanting, which is indispensable to mark that distinction. There would have been no light, to dissipate that moral darkness, in which we should have been involved. Would then those acts, which the law pronounces to be sinful, have been innocent, if not in their nature, at least in their commission, had there been no injunction expressed against them? Certainly acts, injurious in their nature, can under no circumstances, be innocent in their commission; whether their evil effects might be prejudicial to the welfare of mankind, or offensive only to the purity and holiness of God. What would be the social

condition of men, if there were no civil laws for the protection of person and property? What abominations would proceed from the impulse of human passions, if God had not established a moral law, either by the secret dictates of conscience, or by the revealed precepts of his will! Sin, without the law, would still have insured the condemnation of fallen creatures; for as "carnal, we are sold under sin." Sin is our natural birthright. Without any positive law, or conscientious scruples, it would be, as it were, part and parcel of ourselves. It is essentially our characteristic; for "Sin dwelleth in us." "We know that in us—that is in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Sin, so to speak, is the essential element of our souls, the universal law of our nature. Without the divine direction, we should know none other. We are born "in captivity to the law of sin which is in our members." "O wretched that we are! who shall deliver us from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 14—25.) God has, in his mercy, provided an all-sufficient deliverer; and as a preliminary, he has also appointed an accessory, a forerunner as it were, to prepare the way before him, namely, the law.

The law occasions that, which is essentially necessary to the gracious purposes of our deliverer. It instructs us in this great truth, which, without the spiritual direction of God, we should not have known in our natural state,—namely, that sin *is* sin. The

law it is, which represents sin to us in its true light, as the transgression of that which is good, and as working death in us. And so it is "*by the commandment*," that "*sin*" becomes exceeding "*sinful*" in our sight.

Without the law, "*sin is dead.*" Deprived of this monitor, "*we are dead* in trespasses and sins." We are so literally dead, as to have no consciousness of them. We are inanimate, passive, helpless, and hopelessly resigned to them. Without the law, we should walk in abject blindness, "according to the course of this world"—in unresisting subjection to "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Ephes. ii. 2.)

St. Paul illustrates this, by selecting himself as an example. He acknowledges, that he had been, by nature, addicted to all manner of concupiscence. It is evident, that he had been a person of great ambition, from the prominent and active part which he took in the persecution of the infant-church of Christ. He seems to have been more than ordinarily zealous, to recommend himself, by cruel and violent proceedings against the Christians, to the authorities of Jerusalem, both Jewish and Roman. He consented unto Stephen's martyrdom, "making havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women into prison," "breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,"

going officiously of his own accord "unto the High Priest, and desiring letters to Damascus, that, if he found any of that way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." (Acts viii, ix.)

We seem to be reading of an Alva, or Philip II; or of the proconsuls of Nantes and Lyons, rather than of Saul of Tarsus! He was "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious." But he "did it ignorantly, in unbelief." (1 Tim. i. 13.)

Thus ambition, and a love of distinction, accompanied by cruelty, were parts of the natural disposition even of St. Paul. But he acted, he says, in ignorance and unbelief. His condition, at that time, was a deadness in sin. Although the law of the decalogue was in full operation, and known to no one better than to him, yet, from neglect and want of reflection, the state of his mind was, as if there had been no law at all. It was not until the precepts of the law presented themselves with a power of conviction to his conscience, that he became alive to the state of sin, in which he was involved. "I had not known sin," he says, "but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'"

But, when the moral rule, which should have controlled the evil propensities of his disposition, was brought home to his conscience—what was the consequence? Did it work out in him a complete and

perfect obedience? Alas! no! His profession of allegiance was productive only of rebellion. His adoption of the law led only to its transgression. The nature and direction of his offence was altered; but the offence remained. He had previously lived utterly regardless of any law whatever. "I was alive," he says, "without the law once. But, when the commandment came," (when his eyes were opened to all its obligations) did obedience follow? quite the reverse! "*Sin revived*, and I died." (Rom. vii. 7—9.)

The only change effected in him was, from a dead and passive state of sin, to a worse condition, if possible—a living state of consciousness in sin—" *sin revived*, and I died." He felt the living principle of sin within him, and he knew the penalty to be "*death*." While regardless of the law, he lived at least unto the world; but, when the requisitions of the law were manifested to him in their full force; when he became convinced of the inevitable punishment attached to their transgression; when the sense of sin, to which he had been dead, revived; then, he says, "I died." St. Paul well knew that "death," the penalty of transgression, could not possibly be avoided by those, who rest their hopes of salvation on their obedience to the law. "'Moses," he says, (Rom. x. 5.) describeth the righteousness which is of the law,—that the man which doeth these things shall *live by them*." The Lord had declared unto Moses,

(Lev. xviii. 5.), "Ye shall keep my statutes, and my judgments, *which if a man do*, he shall live in them." But what man could attain unto life, on the condition of a perfect obedience to the statutes and judgments of the infinitely pure and holy God! And thus the apostle confesses, "the commandment which was *ordained to life, I found to be unto death.*"

The commandment, instead of being the occasion of obedience, became rather the occasion of sin, through disobedience. "Sin," says St. Paul, "taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and, by it, slew me. If then the law be rather the occasion of sin, than its prevention; if it must be followed by transgression; and, if a perfect obedience to it be impossible, to what purpose does it serve? St. Paul propounds this question in his epistle to the Galatians (chap. iii.) "Wherefore," he says, "serveth the law?" The answer which he gives to the question, which he had thus put, is this: that "it was *added because of transgressions.*"

The written and declared law was added to that indistinct perception between right and wrong, which, by a merciful law of nature, is more or less inherent in the mind of man, producing a partial check to sin in some, but none whatever in many. To this instinct, as it were, the written law "was added, because of transgressions." It was explicitly set forth, that God's people might have a clearer knowledge of his will; and be sensible of their manifold short-

comings, and transgressions. But God, well knowing the weakness and insufficiency of his creatures, did not design the law as the means, by which those creatures should be ultimately brought home, and gathered to Himself. Had that been his intention, God would have delivered his law to his people in his own one Almighty person. But the law was not so vouchsafed. It was "ordained," St. Paul tells us, "by *angels*:" by holy spirits, whom God had commissioned to represent him, and to act in his name. "It was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator," (Gal. iii. 19.) The hands of Moses were the medium, through which the Israelites received the law from the messenger of God. St. Paul proves this, by shewing that a mediator must necessarily imply the transaction of three parties at least. There can be no mediator, where one party alone is concerned. "Now a mediator," he says, "is not a mediator of *One*." That would imply an impossibility. "But God is *One*." The great Eternal is essentially *One*. "His name *alone* is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven." (Ps. cxlviii. 12.) He has thus proclaimed himself by the prophet Isaiah: "I am God—and there is none else. I am God, and there is none like me," "declaring the end from the beginning; and from the ancient times, the things that are not yet done." "I have spoken; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it." "Hearken unto me, ye stout-

hearted, *that are far from righteousness.*" "I bring near MY righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory." (Is. xli. 9—13.)

How could this glorious and Almighty Being be, as it were, a party to any transaction with his creatures? To Him the things not yet done are known from ancient times. To Him the beginning is a declaration of the end. That, which he has spoken, must come to pass. That, which he has purposed, is, as it were, already done. In His sight, the "stout-hearted," they who rely on the strength of their own works, are far from righteousness. The righteousness which alone can approach him, is *His* righteousness. His *salvation* was not in the law delivered at *Sinai*; but in *Zion*. Not for Israel as "*children of the flesh*;" but for Israel, "*His glory*"—for Israel *as children of the promise*. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? and who hath been his counsellor?" "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" "For of him—and to him—and through him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. xi. 34—36.)

God is One. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one. Therefore the law was delegated to angels, (See Appendix, note B.) because it was to be ordained in the hand of a mediator, namely Moses. There can be no *human* mediator between God, who is essentially "*One*," and man. What human being is to stand as an

assessor between the One Almighty "I am," and his creature? Who is to adjudge the terms of a covenant between One who is infinitely independent of, and above all, and any other imaginable party? Therefore God, in relation to his own creatures, is his own mediator. He has appeared in the flesh on earth, in that gracious character. "*God was in Christ*, reconciling the world *unto Himself*" says St. Paul, (2 Cor. v. 19.) By the prophet Isaiah, God also declares of Himself, "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me," "I, even I, am the Lord; and *beside me there is no Saviour.*" (Isaiah xliii. 10, 11.)

He it is, who has stood between *himself* and the frail creatures formed by his omnipotence. He it is, who has mediated between those attributes of *his own* perfection, which could not have been reconciled by any mediator less perfect. It is He only who could, and who has reconciled the perfection of his holiness and justice, with that of His mercy. "For there is one God—and one Mediator, between God and men—the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. ii. 5.) Therefore the covenant of Almighty God with His creatures is not a covenant, by which, as it were, on equal terms, after the manner of men, a condition, if performed by one party, may claim compensation or reward, as of right, by agreement, from the other. The covenant of God with man, to which He Himself is the Mediator, is a covenant not of debt, but of *grace*. All that he grants—all that He will grant, all that He

promises to grant, is his own free gift. But the law, of which Moses was the mediator, was ordained, we are told, not by God as "One," who can know no other mediator but himself, but by his Angels; that it might be within the terms of a simple covenant of works—of works 'quantum valerent.' The imperfect performance by man of such a covenant could never entitle him to the reward of Eternal Life. To this merciful and gracious end, atonement must be made for transgression; and righteousness must be imputed to faith; and faith must work by love, through sanctification of the Holy Spirit of God. No man, therefore, whether Jew or Gentile, must rest on the law, as capable of conferring life. The law is "holy, just and good:" and "if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." But as to the righteousness of the law, "the scripture hath concluded all under sin." "Wherefore then serveth it?"

This is the all-important question. If it cannot lead us to obedience, so as to entitle us to life; but is rather the occasion of disobedience unto death; whereunto serveth it? The Apostle replies to his own question; he removes all the doubts and difficulties of his own explanation of the law, by this most consoling assurance;—namely that, although the law cannot confer a title to life by righteousness, yet "the scripture has included all under sin," *not for purposes of condemnation, but—"that the promise*

by faith of Jesus Christ might be *given to them that believe.*" (Gal. iii. 19—22.)

This was the blessed covenant established by God Himself and alone, not by the hand of any human mediator, but by his word to Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the law was proclaimed. It is the covenant of grace, not of law; the covenant of faith, not of works; the covenant of promise, not of bondage.

The mediator of this covenant was not Moses, nor any mere mortal agent. God is One. Therefore the Mediator of this covenant is the word of God Himself—Emmanuel! God with us. "I and my Father are One, said Christ." (John x. 30, 38.) "The Father is in me and I in Him." It is "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." (Tit. ii. 11.) It is his free and undeserved gift; and Christ in God is "All and in All." More than four hundred years before the law was delivered, this great scheme of salvation was not only designed, but, as it were, accomplished by anticipation in the eternal counsels of the most High.

But besides that written law, which was "ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator," for the special observance of the Israelites, there is also an unwritten law, impressed by the God of nature on the hearts of men. This natural law is, as it were, a kind of instinct, or conscience, by the aid of which we may know of ourselves, if we do not wilfully

stifle this natural monitor, that certain thoughts, words, and actions, are repugnant to the holiness of God. This unwritten law of conscience has existed at all times, in a greater or a less degree, in the hearts of men. The written law of Moses was a specific enforcement of it; and an addition to it. Both have been sublimated, and brought to perfection, by the moral laws and precepts of the Gospel. All three may be considered as standing in the same category as to the "Sin," which is constituted by their infringement; and the "Righteousness," if any, which may be asserted by an obedience to them. There can be no question, that the neglect or breach of these laws does constitute "sin." The only question therefore is, whether an obedience to them constitutes "righteousness." We may presume that obedience, even to the limited extent of human practice, must be acceptable to God, because it is that, which is his own by right. It is simply that, which is his absolute due from all his creatures. But, does it possess any essential *merit* in itself? Is a bounden service, an enjoined obedience, meritorious? Does it establish in those, who practice it, a claim for *compensation* or *reward*. Does it make the Almighty law-giver their *debtor*? There is one, who has answered these questions.

"Any one of you," said he, "having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle," "doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were

commanded him? I trow not." "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you—say, We are *unprofitable servants*; we have done that *which was our duty to do*." (Luke xvii. 7—10.)

"Who hath first given unto the Lord, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" (Rom. xi. 35.)

Thus the law, whether written, or unwritten, whether moral or ceremonial, is merely a service due from man to his Creator. Disobedience is "sin," but obedience is simply a duty. Where then is righteousness? Is not the perfect fulfilment of a duty, it may be asked, in itself, not only negative righteousness, as implying the absence of "sin;" but positive righteousness, inasmuch as it is the performance of God's will, which is righteous? Is not the "law holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good?" (Rom. vii. 12.)

They, therefore, who implicitly obey, and scrupulously perform that which is holy, just, and good, are they not righteous? It will unhappily avail us little, to enter on such inquiries as these, as an abstract speculation. We need not stop to consider, whether the merit of righteousness be not solely due to Him, whose holiness and purity alone have constituted righteousness—in whom, therefore, as the source, from whence righteousness proceeds, it alone can dwell. We need not ask whether, as agents carrying out certain principles of good, the elements

of which are inherent in God only, we can have any direct and positive merit of our own. Alas ! it imports us little, to enter on such questions. We too well know that, after all, the commandment is to us little more than an occasion for sin. The most perfect obedience to the law, to which the best of us can attain, amounts to no more than this—that “the good, which we would, we do not; but the evil, which we would not, that we do.” (Rom. vii. 19.)

The people of Israel, however, “stumbled at this stumbling-stone.” They confounded an obedience to the ceremonial and moral law, imperfect as that obedience was, and always will be, with that perfect righteousness, which is indispensable for the justification and sanctification of man in the sight of a God so holy that he is “of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” This righteousness is utterly unattainable by man. “We are all,” says the prophet Isaiah (lxiv. 6.) an unclean thing; and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; we do all fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” But as in the vision of Zechariah iii. 4. the Lord said unto Joshua—“Take away the filthy garments from him. Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee; and will clothe thee with change of raiment,”—So, it is graciously permitted to each and every one of us, who shall lay hold of the “tree of righteousness, which is by faith” in the promise, to say, in the words of Isaiah—“I will greatly rejoice

in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God : for *He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation ; He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.*" (Isa. lxi.)

St. Paul, in his epistles to the Galatians and Hebrews, clearly explains the vital distinction and difference between " the righteousness which is by the works of the law ;" and " the righteousness which is of faith." He shews that the great end and consummation, the righteousness which is of faith, to which the law served but as an introduction, was pre-ordained in the counsels of God, long before the law was delivered, and even before Abraham was called. He points out, that the true High Priest of the promise had been consecrated, before the priesthood of Aaron and the Levites had any existence. The Apostle's argument is very striking and very clear. The true " High Priest " of the promise, he shews, was not Aaron or Eleazar, or any of the high-priests of the Levites—not any mere man, or order of men :—but, the true High-Priest of the promise is that High-Priest, who was to appear, and who has appeared upon earth—not after the order of the tribe of Levi ; but after the order of "*Melchisedek.*" The attributes and signs of this " order " he specifically points out. The High-Priest after the order of Melchisedek is " made an High-Priest *for ever.*" (Heb. vi. 20.) He is " without father, without mother, and without descent : having neither *beginning of*

days, nor end of life : but made like unto the son of God,—and abideth a priest continually." (Heb. vii. 3.) This divine High-Priest was prophetically foreshewn to Abraham, the father of the promise, in the person of " Melchisedek " the king of Salem, when the Patriarch returned from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings." (Gen. xiv. 17—24.)

SECTION XXIX.

Abraham, a prototype of the fundamental Christian doctrine ; “ Righteousness imputed to faith which worketh by love.”

Let us now take a short view of Abraham’s history, from its earliest period. We shall see in that history, how significantly and clearly it sets forth a prophetic type of that gracious and merciful dispensation of salvation, which Almighty God has decreed in his own eternal counsels should be, not a debt due from him to the meritorious works of his creatures, but his own free gift. If St. Paul be the Apostle of the Gentiles, we, as Gentiles, are bound to accept his exposition of the divine decrees. He clearly establishes the five following points.

1st. That eternal life will be restored to man, “ not by works of righteousness, which we have done.” (Titus iii. 5.)

2ndly. That salvation will be vouchsafed through “ the righteousness of God, which is by *faith* of

Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe." (Rom. iii. 22.)

3rdly. "That this Faith *worketh by love*." (Gal. v. 6.)

4thly. That the *love*, by which faith *worketh*, is nothing less than "the *obedience* of faith." (Rom. xvi. 26.) Our works then, are not works of meritorious righteousness—they are simply works of *obedience*, effected by love towards our Saviour and Creator ; and, therefore, proceeding from, and also manifesting our faith in Him. Unless therefore we have such love to our Saviour, as shall work in us an obedience to his laws, through sanctification of the Spirit, we cannot have a saving faith.—Thus :

5thly. Salvation is the free, unmerited *gift* of God ; not conferred on account of man's works, but conferred by God's free and gracious election of all, who possess such a *faith*, as worketh *obedience* (although imperfect) by *love* of Him in Christ. And so salvation is "according to the election of *grace*." The argument is thus conclusive : because "if it be by *grace*, then is it no more of works. Otherwise *grace* is no more *grace*. But if it be of works—then it is no more *grace*, otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. xi. 5, 6.)—By such a doctrine the grace of God would be altogether superseded by the works of his own fallen creature man !

We shall see how this doctrine of the gospel, which St. Paul has so clearly expounded, is prophetically

prefigured in the history of Abraham, who, together with his descendants, was appointed as the means to bring it to perfection, in the fulness of time.

Abram had accompanied his Father Terah, from Ur of the Chaldees, to Haran, in Mesopotamia, north of the Euphrates. After Terah's death, by God's command, he left Haran and established himself at Sichem, in the plain of Moreh, in the land of *Canaan*, by the Almighty's direct appointment. "Get thee unto a land that *I will shew thee.*" (Gen. xii.) Before his departure, he had also received his first promise. "I will make of thee *a great nation*, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and *thou shalt be a blessing.* And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee,"—"and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." At Sichem God further confirmed this promise as to the great nation, which should proceed from Abram. "Unto thy seed will I give this land." This occurred 1900 years before Christ. We know that 430 years after Abram had settled at Sichem, the Israelites were established, as a national confederacy in this very land, and so far that portion of God's prophetic promise to Abram was then literally accomplished. At Sichem, Abram "built an altar to the Lord." This altar was the first of those several sanctuaries, which were subsequently set up by himself, and by his posterity. It was erected at Sichem, or Shechem, near *Mount Gerizim*. This circumstance is a parallel

of the fact of which the woman of Samaria reminded our blessed Lord. "Our Fathers worshipped in this mountain ; and ye (of the tribe of Judah) say, that in Jerusalem is the place, where men ought to worship." (John iv. 20.)

Samaria was the seat of government of the ten revolted tribes, in which *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* (sons of Joseph) were included. After the captivity and dispersion, Shalmaneser and Esarhaddon had colonised this country from Babylon, Cuthal, and other places. This people adopted a kind of mixed religion, ingrafting the worship of Jehovah on their own idolatrous superstitions. "They feared the Lord, and served their own gods." Thus the revolted tribes were succeeded in their territory by those half-converted heathen colonists.

In Samaria, therefore, we find an exact epitome of the heathen world, established in the inheritance of Joseph's sons and the other tribes ; and, even at that time, partially instructed by the priesthood of those tribes in the knowledge and worship of the true God. For though at first, "they knew not the manner of the God of the land ;" yet "the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "carry thither *one of the Priests, whom ye brought from thence ;* and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land." (2 Kings xvii.)

Thus in Samaria, and at Mount Gerizim, in the future portion of *Ephraim*, there was, at so early a

period as near 700 years before its actual accomplishment under the gospel, a partial manifestation of *Joseph's birth-right*; namely the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge of God. These considerations seem to reveal a prophetic significance in the first erection by Abram (in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed) of an altar to the Lord, *at Sichem near Mount Gerizim*. "He removed thence to a mountain on the east of Bethel, and there," again, "he builded an altar unto the Lord." This second altar was erected within the future allotment of *Benjamin*, Joseph's brother.

We now come to a most remarkable incident in Abram's life, exhibiting a complete parallel to the history of his descendants two hundred years afterwards. "And there was a *famine in the land* (the land of Canaan.) And Abram went down into *Egypt* to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land," (Gen. xii. 10.) "the famine was in the land of Canaan," "and Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt." (Gen. xlii. 3.) Joseph was heir of that great birth-right, namely the *deliverance from the bondage* of corruption, into the *glorious liberty* of the children of God," (Rom. viii. 21.) "wherewith Christ hath made us free." (Gal. v. 1.) Joseph possessed the birth-right of this promise. Sarai was the *free-woman*, the mother of "Isaac and the children of the promise." (Gal. iv. 23, 28.) Pharaoh distinguished Joseph by every kind of honour and reward that he

could heap upon him. "See" said he, "I have set thee over all the land of Egypt." "And he took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck." "And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah." One that discovers hidden things; in the Egyptian tongue—"a Saviour of the world." (Gen. xli. 41—45.) (Cruden's Original languages.)

As the destined heir of the birth-right was thus honoured by the Pharaoh of the day, when the Israelites came into Egypt to buy bread because of the famine in Canaan—so also was Sarai, the free-woman, and destined mother of the promise, favoured by the Pharaoh of Abram's day, when he went into Egypt because of the famine in Canaan. "The woman was taken into Pharaoh's home; and he entreated Abram well for her sake; and he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and camels, &c." In like manner Pharaoh dealt kindly with the children of Israel for Joseph's sake; and "Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly." (Gen. xlvii.) But, the Pharaoh of after days would not let the Israelites depart out of his land, when they desired to accomplish that, which had been prophetically promised to them by Joseph, when he said unto them, "I die; and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of

this land, unto the land, which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." (Gen. i. 24.)

Therefore the Lord declared by his servant Moses to Pharaoh, "I will at this time send all my *plagues* upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people." (Ex. ix. 14.) So, the Pharaoh of Abram and Sarai, was similarly visited. "The Lord *plagued* Pharaoh and his house, with great *plagues*, because of Sarai, Abram's wife." Finally, the Pharaoh of the Israelites "called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get ye forth from among my people, and go serve the Lord." (Ex. xii. 31.) The Pharaoh of Abram also "called Abram and said, Behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way:—and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had." (Gen. xii.)

The Israelites, we know, went up out of the land of Egypt, and, after a long sojourning in the wilderness, became at length settled in the land of Canaan, which the Lord "gave to them for a possession." Abram, also, "went up out of Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had, and *Lot with him*," "even to Bethel," "unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning:" "unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first." (Gen. xiii.)

Lot was with him. Now, when the Israelites were about to be established in their respective portions in the promised land, "the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Unto these the land shall *be divided* for an in-

heritance." (Num. xxvi. 53.) In the execution of this command, "Moses gave to the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, the kingdoms of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Basan." (Num. xxxii. 24.) Thus "the two tribes, and the half tribe, received their inheritance on this side Jordan, near Jericho *eastward*, toward the sun-rising." (Num. xxxiv. 15.) A similar separation took place between Abram and Lot, when they returned into Canaan from Egypt. "Abram said unto Lot, is not the whole land before thee?" "Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me." "And Lot beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was watered every where." "Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed *east*: and they separated themselves, the one from the other."

No parallel can well be more exact than the incidents of *Abram's* history, which we have been reviewing, as typical of the future history of his *progeny*. Up to this period, we have seen that the altar of the Lord, which had been first set up at Sichem on Mount Gerizim in Samaria, in the future portion of Ephraim, was now at Bethel, in the future portion of Benjamin. Its position was in all respects relative to Joseph's destiny.—And now, at the altar so situated, placed as it had been, and still was, in the midst, as it were, of the intended destiny of Joseph's birth-right, the Lord vouchsafed again to make the follow-

ing declaration to Abram. The Lord said, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look *from the place where thou art*—northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward ; " "for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed *for ever*." "*For ever !*" The future kingdom of his seed, which he was called upon to contemplate from the sanctuary in *Joseph's inheritance*, in unlimited extent, looking to all the four quarters of the globe—was to be a kingdom *for ever !*

"*To thy seed.*" "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God," (merely because they are the seed of Abraham,) "but the children of the *promise* are counted for the seed." The children of the flesh, we know, did not possess this gift of the promised land "*for ever*." They have been utterly driven out of it, and are dispersed throughout all lands. The inheritance, here promised under the figure of an earthly inheritance, was in fact a spiritual inheritance :—the dominion intended was "an everlasting dominion." (Dan. vii. 14.) The subjects of that dominion are not the 12000 from each tribe of Israel, but "a multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues." (Rev. vii.) For saith the Lord to Abram at Bethel—"I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth ; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." This

is the great prophetic blessing of the intended birth-right, which was to be established in Isaac, and in Jacob, and in Joseph, and "marked upon the *stick of Ephraim*, as all the house of Israel, *his companions*." The Lord then proceeds to the more immediate and temporal destiny of Abram. "Arise," he says, "walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

He had been allowed a prophetic glimpse of that innumerable family, which should proceed from him, as children of the promise, by Sarai the free-woman, and the unbounded extent of their inheritance. He was now to take an actual survey of the real land, in which his seed, after the flesh, were to be established, as the instruments for bringing to pass the vast and ultimate design. Abram, therefore, left Bethel. He quitted the future visionary scenes of Joseph's destiny, the site of Gerizim, the future portion of Ephraim; and the future allotment of Benjamin; He "removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron; and built there an altar unto the Lord." Hebron is in the land of Judah. The altar at Mamre, therefore, had reference to *that* tribe, the stock of Abraham's seed after the flesh; the root from whence Messiah was to come in the order of genealogy.

We now arrive at a most wonderful and important incident in the early history of Abram. During the time that he was dwelling at Mamre, he heard of the

violence committed upon his nephew Lot, by Chedorlaomer and the kings. The account of his successful expedition for the rescue of Lot will be found in the 14th chapter of Genesis. After his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, while he was at the valley of Shaveh, Melchizedek, king of Salem came to meet him, and brought forth bread and wine. He was Priest of the most high God, and he blessed him, and said, "blessed be Abram, of the most high God, possessor of Heaven and earth." Let us now consider with attention the sublime and mysterious character, which attached to the person of Melchizedek, and to his interview with Abram. "Melchizedek" is by interpretation, "*King of Righteousness*." (Heb. vii. 2.) He was, in fact, "King of Salem." The seat of his kingdom was called "Salem"—that is, "Peace," "Complete," "Perfect." It was the site of God's sanctuary. "At Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling in Sion." (Ps. lxxvi. 2.) At Salem was mount Moriah. "Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem on mount Moriah." (2 Chron. iii. 1.) On this same mount Moriah, Abram himself offered up his son Isaac. He called this sacred spot "Jehovah-Jireh"—the interpretation of which is—"the Lord *will provide*." "The Lord will be *manifested, or seen*." The connection of Jehovah-Jireh" with "Salem" (whence the name Jerusalem) will signify "The Lord, who provides, or manifests complete and

perfect peace." Of this holy seat, where the Lord provides "perfect peace," Isaiah speaks in the lxii. chapter, and there he emphatically points to what people the blessing of that "perfect peace" shall be applied; and, also, on what foundation that blessing of perfect peace rests. "For Jerusalem's sake, he says, I will not rest, until the righteousness *thereof* (not the righteousness of man, but the righteousness of "Jerusalem," of "Jehovah Jireh-salem," "the Lord who provides peace"—until *His* righteousness) "go forth as brightness, and the *salvation thereof* as a lamp that burneth." "And *the Gentiles* shall see *thy* righteousness; and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a *new name*, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." We find that "new name" noticed, in the revelation of St. John, as "a new name" written on a "white stone," (Rev. ii. 17.)—"which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." He that receiveth it, then, and he only, can know that "new name." Who is he that receiveth it? Not the *natural man*. For,—“the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” But, he that is spiritual, he it is, that can both "know," and "receive," this "new name"—for "he that is spiritual judgeth all things," and it is they, who "have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. ii. 14—16.)

Of this sacred place, "Jireh-salem," or Jerusalem,

(" the Lord shall provide peace ") the prophet proceeds to say, that it shall be " a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God : "—" thou shalt no more be termed forsaken." (Is. lxii. 3.) In another place he had represented Zion as bewailing her forsaken condition, abandoned by her God.—" Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." (Is. xlix. 14.) But he confirms the gracious assurance of a pardoning God, expressed in (liv. 7).—" For a small moment have I forsaken thee ; but, with great mercies will I gather thee." In the same spirit of redeeming mercy he continues in the 62nd chapter,—" neither shall thy land be called any more desolate"—in opposition to the denunciation contained in his 1st chapter—" your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire—your land strangers devour it in your presence—it is desolate as overthrown by strangers." This sad state of desolation is not to be the final condition of the spiritual Zion, of the new Jerusalem ; though of the old there may not be " one stone left upon another"—for says the Prophet—" Thou shalt be called " Hephzibah ! " (" my delight is in her ")—and thy land, " Beulah " (married.) The real " Jireh-salem " the heavenly Jerusalem, of which the old was but a type, shall be " Beulah "—" *married.*" For " as a young man marieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee ; and, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall

thy God rejoice over thee." St. John in the apocalypse beheld the new Jerusalem, not as the prophet Joel had described the old city as "a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth," (Joel i. 8.) but rejoicing in all the privileges of her married state—as "Hephzi-bah"—as "Beulah." One of the seven angels said unto him—"come hither; I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife." "And he shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." "The *nations of them which are saved* shall walk in the light of it: and the *kings of the earth* do bring their glory and honour into it." (Rev. xxi. 9, 10, 24.) The prophet proclaims the gracious object, and the glorious issue, of this divine marriage of the Lamb, and the new Jerusalem; "Behold the Lord hath proclaimed, unto the end of the world, say ye to the daughter of Zion, behold thy salvation cometh, behold his reward is with him, and his work before him." This is the object of the marriage of the Lamb—a work to be accomplished—a reward to be conferred—salvation to come! "And they shall call them—The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called—"sought out"—"a city not forsaken." (Is. lxii. 11, 12.) This is the issue of the marriage—"A holy people, "the *redeemed* of the Lord."—The new city shall not be like her of old—"forsaken"—but a city *sought out*.

Although a type of that spiritual and heavenly

Jerusalem, described in the vision of St. John, the real Salem, of which Melchizedek was Priest and king, was probably a city of very humble pretension. Nevertheless, it was the site destined to become the metropolitan sanctuary, as it were, of the invisible as well as the visible church of God :—of the gospel as well as of the law ;—of those who should worship Him, not only in the ceremonial courts of his temple, but in “ spirit and in truth.” Hence, even in the days of Abram, this obscure town or fort, bore that emphatic name which signified its future prerogatives of divine grace and mercy.—“ *Salem* ”—“ Peace ”—“ complete ”—“ perfect.” This prophetic name, or title, would indeed have been of all others the least appropriate, had it been intended to signify only the temporal history hitherto, of the future city. In a sense of worldly peace and tranquillity, from the time that it constituted the capital of the kingdom of Judah, almost to the final period of its destruction, it was the scene of constantly recurring attacks, sieges, and hostile devastation. In a spiritual sense, or, in its future millennial state only, shall we find, “ peace within her walls, and plenteousness within her palaces.” Of the temporal Salem, however, as it existed in Abram’s days, Melchizedek was both king and priest, of the most High God. We know nothing of any worldly power, or greatness, for which he was remarkable. Like the seat of his dominion, the spiritual and prophetic *name*, which he bore, alone marked the sacred

character of his destiny. He was called "Melchizedek," "King of Righteousness."—This was his high distinction—the King of righteousness ruling over the city of Peace. With the exception of the blessing, which he pronounced on Abram, as a fellow worshipper with himself of the most High God, possessor of heaven and earth ;—with that exception, and one other of great significance, to which we shall shortly refer, we hear nothing further of this King of Salem. We are told nothing of his earthly genealogy ;—of his father, his mother, or his ancestry,—of his early life or his subsequent destiny. We know, only, that he was King, and a Priest of God, without the intermediate consecration of any previously established order of priesthood. His consecration, therefore, was perfectly different to that of the Hebrew priesthood, to which, in after years, the tribe of Levi was appointed by an hereditary succession. This King and Priest, consecrated by the most High God alone, blessed Abram ; and he also ministered to him in another remarkable manner. He brought forth to him *Bread and Wine*. This act was clearly designed to bear some other signification than the mere refreshment of Abram after the fatigues of his expedition. The particulars, which are stated, shew that no provision for this purpose was required. Abram had "brought back all the goods : " and, that he stood in need of no sustenance seems almost *intentionally* expressed in the account, which has been recorded.

He said to the king of Sodom—"I will not take from a thread to a shoe-latchet, save only that which the young men *have eaten*." We shall find, therefore, that this, as well as all the other circumstances, which have been handed down to us, relating to the interview of Abram with Melchizedek, had a future spiritual and typical meaning.

SECTION XXX.

The priesthood of Melchizedek and of Christ superior to the Levitical priesthood of the Law.

We will now proceed to contemplate the wonderful parallel, which exists between Melchizedek as the type, and Christ, as the antitype in these prophetic incidents.

Melchizedek was priest of the most high God.

Jesus, the Son of God, is the "great high priest that is passed into the heavens." (Heb. iv. 14.) He was "the Apostle and high priest of our profession." (Heb. iii. 1.)

Melchizedek was consecrated not by man, nor by himself, but by God's appointment. He stood, as it were, alone in the priesthood.

"Christ glorified not himself to be made an high-priest; but He that said unto him—Thou art my Son—this day have I begotten thee." (Heb. v. 5.)

The priesthood of Melchizedek proceeded from no human order of hierarchy.

The priesthood of Christ was identical with that of its type, He was "a priest

The divine order of Melchizedek's priesthood proceeded immediately from God;—and in that sense he was “like unto the Son of God, and abided a priest continually.” No one could divest him of that sacred order so conferred.

“Melchizedek” was “king of righteousness.”

Melchizedek was king of Salem, the city of “*Peace*.”

The book of Genesis conveys no information as to the

after the order of Melchizedek”—(Heb. v. 10.) by direct consecration of God alone.

Christ was that holy thing which the Angel said should be called the Son of God. (Luke i. 35.)

The Baptist “bare record that this is the Son of God,” (John i. 34.) and thus, Jesus is made an High priest *for ever*, after the order of Melchizedek. (Heb. vi. 20.)

Christ's kingdom was the kingdom of righteousness.—It is so expressed by St. Paul to the Hebrews in the words of the Psalmist, (Ps. xlv.) “A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” (Heb. i. 8.)

The child which should be born; the Son which should be given;—on whose shoulders the government should rest;—whose “name should be called Wonderful! Counsellor! The mighty God! The everlasting Father!” He, who should sit “on the throne of David,” and “upon his kingdom,”—He is styled by the prophet Isaiah “*The Prince of Peace*.” (Is. ix. 6.)

St. Paul represents our ignorance, as to the parentage

ancestry or posterity of Melchizedek. He is noticed *alone*, nor have we any details as to his previous or subsequent history. We know not where he was born, nor where he died.

and descendants of the king of Salem, and of the events of his life, as the figurative description of a being, who existed "without father, without mother, without descent; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God"—that is like unto Christ Jesus our Lord. (Heb. vii. 3.)

"Melchizedek," "the king of righteousness," the sovereign of "Salem," "Peace," who had neither beginning of days nor end of life, but was made like unto the Son of God—the High Priest of God—"brought forth bread and wine," to Abraham.

He, who is High Priest for ever, consecrated by God after the same order as Melchizedek himself, Christ "our righteousness," "took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to his disciples, and said, take eat, this is my body." "And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. xxvi. 26—28.)

Abram gave to Melchizedek "tithes of all." He thus acknowledged that the tithe, at least, of his earthly possessions, was due from him to the priest of the most high God, as a sign of his devotion, as an evidence of his faith, and as a token of his gratitude for the glorious promise which had been vouchsafed to him.

The Apostle draws from this circumstance an inference of the superior sanctity of that priesthood, of which Melchizedek was the shadow, and Christ the substance, over the priesthood of the tribe of Levi, the hereditary priesthood of the law.

“Consider,” he says, “how great this man was,” (that is, in his sublime character as a type of Christ) “unto whom even the Patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.” “Verily they, that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.” This ordinance was merely an equitable distribution of the good things of the world among the members, as it were, of one family. “Levi received tithes from their brethren; they being all equally descended from the loins of their common father Abraham. The “first-fruits” and the tithes were a necessary provision for the sacerdotal order of Levi, who had no portion in the land; and who were excluded from secular pursuits by their service in the sanctuary. “The Lord spake unto Aaron, “Thou shalt have no inheritance in the land, neither shalt thou have any part among them.” Behold I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel, for an inheritance for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.” (Numb. xviii. 21.)

But the tithe, which Abram offered to Melchisedek, was tendered upon different principles; and on other considerations. Melchisedek’s descent was not counted from Abraham; yet he received tithes from him, as an offering, not connected with the law, which was to come, but signifying “*the Promise*,” which had al-

ready been given. "He received tithes of Abraham; and blessed *him that had the promise*," and, without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better." By pronouncing this blessing, Melchisedek shewed that he, who represented the "King of Righteousness," the empire of "Peace," was the superior of him, on whom the promise had been bestowed. Melchisedek personated the gracious being, who conferred the promise:—Abraham the seed only, who received it. The tithes of Levi were nothing more than a temporal provision for mortal men. "Here men that die receive tithes; but there he received them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth." The infinite superiority of the High Priesthood of Melchisedek's order is further proved by another inference, which the Apostle draws; namely this—that, when Abram, the forefather of Levi, offered tithes to the King of Righteousness; the very priesthood of Levi themselves virtually offered the same homage in the person of their progenitor. "As I may so say" he remarks—"Levi, who received tithes (after the law) himself paid tithes (to Melchisedek) *in Abraham*—for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedek met him." (Heb. vii.)

The substantial conclusion, which these typical figures shadow forth, is, then, evident, namely that the Levitical Priesthood of the law of ceremonial and moral works is subordinate to that far higher Priesthood of Him, who was an High Priest after the order

of Melchisedek—of Him whose sanctuary is not at mount Sinai, which gendereth unto bondage, and which is in bondage with her children; but whose sanctuary is the new Jerusalem, which is above, which is free; and which, (like Sarai the free woman) is mother of us all.”

If we look then for a perfect law, we shall find it, not in the law of works, but in “the perfect law of liberty.” We shall find it, not in our own strength, but in the free gift of God’s grace by his holy Spirit. For, “every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.” (James i. 25, 17.)

Had our ability to obey the law been all-sufficient, we should have required no other principle, or rule of righteousness, than the letter of the law itself. We should have wanted the direction and sanction of no High Priest, greater than Aaron and his descendants. “If perfection,” says the Apostle, “were by the Levitical priesthood, what further need was there that another priest should rise, after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?” But if the “priesthood be changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the Law.” The priesthood *is* changed—for He, who is after Melchisedec’s order, like his prototype, is quite independent of the tribe of Levi, the Hebrew hierarchy. Though he, like his fore-runner, has spiritually no genealogy; yet, after the flesh he proceeds from

another tribe than that of Levi—a tribe, of which “no man gave attendance at the altar.” “For it is evident, that our Lord (after the flesh) sprang out of *Judah*, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.” The priesthood of Melchisedec was not an hereditary order; the priesthood of Christ is not an hereditary order. In this respect the apostle’s assertion is literally true, that their right and title to the sacerdotal supremacy was not by succession of birth; but was “without father, without mother, without descent.” The hereditary order of the priesthood in Levi is then completely changed in Christ: and there is consequently, “of necessity a change also of the law.” Hence the commandment of the law is disannulled, “for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.” It is annulled not so much on account of any essential imperfection in itself; for the law being a divine command, and expressing the will of God, “is holy, and just, and good.” But it is weak, and unprofitable in its operation, as a rule of moral practice to fallen creatures, whose natural depravity prevents their yielding to it an obedience so exact and unerring, as to satisfy the holiness and justice of an all-perfect God. “For the law *made* nothing perfect,” no man therefore could hope to be justified in the sight of God, by his own obedience to its requirements. “But the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God.” (Heb. vii. 19.) So defective is the law, as the means

of reconciling sinful men to the justice of the Creator, that even the very priests of its sanctuary are habitually guilty of disobeying its injunctions. "Every high-priest taken from among men," is "himself also compassed with infirmity." (Heb. v. 1, 2.) In such a priesthood there could be no hope of an effectual mediation. We must look to some superior source of intercession, if we would find "an anchor for the soul sure and stedfast." "Such an high-priest, therefore, became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the Heavens." Namely He, who "is consecrated a Son for evermore by the word of that oath, which was sworn by God, since the law, through his servant David; where the Lord sware, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek." (Ps. cx. 4.)

Now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum. We have an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens—"a minister of the *sanctuary*, and of the *true tabernacle*, which the Lord pitched, and not man." This high priest, this heavenly sanctuary, and true tabernacle, constitute the substance and reality of the promise which was made unto Abram. This is the high priest, to whom he offered tithes in the person of Melchisedek; this is the true tabernacle, of which those at Sichem, at Bethel, and at Mamre; that of the Exodus also, and at Shiloh; and even the first and second temples at Jerusalem, were but sha-

dows. "But every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore, it is of necessity, that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Heb. viii. 1—3.) Therefore Christ, "the High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, "neither by the blood of goats and calves, but *by his own blood*, entered in *once* unto the holy place, having obtained (not any reward for our imperfect obedience of a moral or ceremonial law) but having obtained *eternal redemption for us*." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." (Heb. ix. 11, 12, 28.) But the priesthood being thus changed, there is made of necessity, a change also of the law. And thus, "Christ, by his new covenant, made the first old, and ready to vanish away." (Heb. viii. 13.) The old covenant was that of works by the law: the new covenant is that of righteousness which is by faith, through grace. To this covenant, man is no contracting party; "God is one." "A mediator is not a mediator of one." Therefore, Christ is not a mediator, to assess the value of man's work, on the one hand, and the reward due from God to him for his performances on the other. But God incarnate as Christ, is his own Mediator—the mediator between his own attributes—namely, his attributes of holiness and justice on the one hand, and of his infinite mercy and loving-kindness, on the other. And thus, "not by works of righteousness which we have done,

but according to his mercy he saved us." (Tit. iii. 5.) "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel in those days, saith the Lord; I will put *my laws into their mind*, and write *them in their hearts*." Shall then they, who by grace and faith, have the laws of God written in their minds and hearts, rest on their obedience to these laws as their title of salvation? As, under the old law of Moses, —shall he that "doeth those things live by them?" No! the new covenant acknowledges no debt even to those, in whose minds and hearts the law of God is written: but even to them the gracious promise is this:—"I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. viii. 10, 12.)

This new covenant, "by which the first was made old," "decayed," and "ready to vanish away," was recognized and proclaimed by David, in the spirit of prophecy, a thousand years before the law of works, the law of his own nation and kingdom, was superseded by the new law of the gospel. St. Paul reminds us, that "even David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works—saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Rom. iv. 6, 7.)

As David thus celebrated the new law of righteousness which is of faith, and worketh by love, a

thousand years before it was brought to light by the gospel ; so, also, did Abraham adopt and practice that new law, a thousand years before the time of David, and more than four hundred years before the written moral and ceremonial law was delivered by God to his own descendants. " Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness ;" and this righteousness of faith, " was reckoned unto him, not when he was in circumcision, but in uncircumcision." The rite of circumcision itself was not a seal to himself or his posterity of their justification by the law which was to be proclaimed from Sinai, but he received the sign of circumcision, as a seal of the righteousness of *faith*, which he had yet being uncircumcised ; that he might be the Father, (not of the Jews only) but of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be *imputed* unto them also. Now it was not so written for his sake alone, *that it was imputed unto him* ; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead : who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. iv.)

Are there those, who would question this doctrine of " imputed righteousness," and " justification by faith which worketh by love "—a doctrine so clearly expounded by St. Paul ?—We would refer them to the spirit of prophecy. It was revealed to St. John, that " the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of pro-

phesy.” (Rev. xix. 10.) We would refer them, then, to the prophetic spirit, which breathes in the psalms of David ; and to the prophetic spirit, which prompted the faith and obedience of Abraham, and marked out, as it were, as a directing guide, every event and incident of his life. We have seen that every particular event in Abram’s history, so far as we have hitherto reviewed it, is typical of the universal salvation of mankind, Gentile as well as Jew, by a righteousness, which is *imputed* through “ Faith, which worketh by love.” We have seen, that this is the great and ultimate object of that gracious promise, of which Sarai the free-woman (though barren at first) was the Mother ; and the birth-right of which was vested, through the line of the younger sons, in Jacob, and Joseph. We have seen, that the moral and ceremonial law, which followed, was merely instrumental to this great end as an introduction to its accomplishment—that this accomplishment was effected, not by the works which the law rejoined, but, by the mediation of the one only God reconciling by himself his own perfect attributes of justice and mercy, through his own blood, which he freely offered as the great high priest of our salvation, after the order of Melchisedek. Abraham stands forth the Prophetic Father, as it were, of this grand scheme of redemption, which required that two thousand years should pass away, before the world should be prepared for its consummation. Though, after the flesh,

he was the direct ancestor of those, to whom the covenant of the law of works was delivered at mount Sinai ; yet all the circumstances of his history, which we have so far considered, tended to that great ultimate object, the new law of "righteousness by faith," which could only be then dimly foreseen, through the long prophetic vista of two thousand years. Yet we have reason to be assured, that he himself comprehended the real nature of that promise, and of that blessing, of which he was the origin, the type, and, (as it were,) the first-fruit by anticipation. For our blessed Lord declared to the Jews, "*Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it, and was glad.*" (John viii. 56.)

SECTION XXXI.

The tests of Abraham's faith.—The credentials of his faith not more convincing than those of Christianity.

We will now consider the several points on which the faith of Abraham was tested. We shall see, that it was a faith so implicit, so firm, so deeply grounded in an assured confidence, that no outward circumstances of improbability could shake it. The whole tenour of the scripture history shews, that the communication by God to Abraham was direct and clear. It was in the nature of an announcement by the very word of Almighty God himself. We may perhaps think so appalling a manifestation of the divine presence as an intercourse by actual speech, could leave no possible room for doubt, or misgiving. It may seem, therefore, that a faith, established on such evidence, was inevitable ; and that it could prefer but slight pretensions to that imputation of righteousness, with which, nevertheless, it pleased God to distinguish it. But do we, in fact, find, from historical

testimony, or from our own experience, that a true, lively and animating faith is the necessary consequence of divine manifestations, even though they may be, we may almost say, fully equal to that which was vouchsafed to Abraham? Our blessed Lord has shewn, first by parabolic precept; secondly by examples in his own ministry; and, thirdly, by his own personal experience; how weak is the principle of faith in the human mind, even when the most convincing demonstrations are presented to it.

It has been an argument of modern sceptics, "shew me a person raised from the dead, and I will believe." But our Lord knew far better the infirmity of human faith. In his parable of "Dives," he represents Abraham himself as saying, that the evidence of prophecy, and the records of the Mosaic history and law, are equivalent, as evidence, to the restoration of life to a dead man. "Abraham saith, they have Moses and the Prophets. Let them hear them." "Nay, father Abraham," Dives replies—"but, if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent."—"He said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke xvi. 29, 31.)

This was no figure used by our Lord to describe with all the emphasis, which an imaginary representation could confer, the feeble character of faith, as a principle in the human mind. He furnished, as we shall shew, the clearest proofs, that the words which

he had put into Abraham's mouth were true in fact, by the incidents which occurred in his own ministry ; and by the conduct which he experienced from his own chosen disciples.

It was in the house of a ruler of the synagogue, that our Lord uttered these words of divine power, " Talitha-cumi ! " They, who were present, " were astonished with a great astonishment ! " (Mark v. 38.) It could not be otherwise ! So was Abraham, doubtless, " astonished with a great astonishment," when he heard the voice of the Lord speaking unto him. So we, also, of the present day, can hardly fail to be astonished with a great astonishment, when we read the following words which we know were first recorded 700 years before the Christian æra ; and compare them with the account of their literal accomplishment contained in the first chapter of St. Matthew. " Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Is. vii. 14.) So, also, when we read in the same prophet, " I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. (Isaiah l. 6.) And again, when we read in the Psalm xxii. which we know was written a thousand years before Christ, these words, " My God ! my God ! look upon me ; why hast thou forsaken me ; They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." " They pierced my hands and my feet. All they

that see me laugh me to scorn ; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying, He trusted in God that he would deliver him : let him deliver him if he will have him.”—When we read these words, and see that it is related in St. Matthew’s gospel xxvii. “ They spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head : ” and in chapter xxvi. “ Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him ; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,” —“ They crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots.” “ They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads.”—When we read, that “ about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, “ Eli ! Eli ! lama Sabacthani ! ” My God ! My God ! why hast thou forsaken me ! ”—When we contemplate the prophecies to which we have referred, uttered so many hundred years before their fulfilment to the very letter ; surely we cannot be otherwise than “ astonished with a great astonishment.”

But, alas ! as it was with the ruler of the synagogue, so is it with us. The Ruler and his family, and they who beheld his dead daughter raised again to life, “ were astonished with a great astonishment.” But what effect did this astonishment produce ? Did the father of this young child, so miraculously restored to him, like the father of him with the dumb spirit, (Mark ix. 24.) cry, with tears, “ Lord ! I believe, help

those mine unbelief?" No such impression appears to have been permanently made upon him.

The miracle was performed at Capernaum, and Jesus proceeded, afterwards, from thence to Nazareth. We know that there was a synagogue at Nazareth, and it was, probably, of this synagogue that Jairus was ruler.

What, then, was the reception, which our Lord experienced, when he taught in that synagogue immediately after he had exhibited his divine power by a demonstration of the greatest of all mercies to the Ruler—an act of mercy, to him of all men, the most calculated to excite unbounded gratitude, and the firmest conviction that he, who had performed it, was indeed the person whom he declared himself to be, the Son of God? Was this Ruler so convinced? Our Lord certainly had "charged them straitly that no man should know it." But, in other cases, when "he charged them that they should tell no man—the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it." (Mark vii.) On those occasions the parties, who had witnessed his power, could not resist the impulse to proclaim it. Their zeal was not to be repressed when once really excited. Our Lord himself said to the Pharisees, when they called upon him to rebuke the multitude for rejoicing and praising God for all the mighty works that they had seen: "I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke xix. 40.) Did Jairus, then, in the fulness of his joy and grati-

tude and faith, make known the miracle by which Jesus had raised from the dead his daughter of twelve years old ? Did he follow him from Capernaum to Nazareth, and there make known the wondrous work which he had done ? Whether he were Ruler of the synagogue at Nazareth, or of one in his own city, he must have possessed great influence in these places of assembly. Did he then, there, bear testimony to the divine power, which Jesus had manifested, and which he had witnessed ?—Far from it ! Our Saviour, the very next sabbath, “ began to preach in the synagogue.” His word was with power. “ And many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things ? and what wisdom is this, which is given to him ; that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands.” They had no doubt whatever as to his ability to perform these mighty works. They were notorious, executed openly in the sight of the people, and many were ready enough to avail themselves of them. Urged by his affliction, Jairus himself “ fell at his feet, and besought him greatly—lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live.” But after that his end was obtained, we hear no expression from him similar to that, which was uttered by Nicodemus, (himself a ruler of the Jews, and a Pharisee,) “ No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him ? (John iii. 2.) Yet the work, which Jesus had achieved at Capernaum, was

one calculated to prove, beyond all question, the divine energy, by which all his other mighty works had been accomplished.

Thus, when Herod the Tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, he imagined that it could be none other than John the Baptist. "He is *risen*," he said, "*from the dead*, and *therefore* mighty works do shew forth themselves in him." (Matt. xiv. 2.) To produce life from death is a guarantee for all other power. But not such was the conviction produced in the synagogue of Nazareth, even after that wonderful command had been obeyed, "Talitha cumi." We find incredulity instead of faith;—contempt and disparagement, instead of honour and glory. "Is not this the carpenter; the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses; of Juda and Simon? and they were offended at him." (Mark v. 3.) Precisely in the same spirit, when he subsequently taught in the temple, the Jews then marvelled, saying, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" "Lo! he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?" "Howbeit, we know whence this man is: but, when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is." "And they sought to take him." (John vii. 14—27.)

So, when Jesus manifested the same divine power, by the raising of Lazarus, "many of the Jews believed on him. But some went their way to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had

done." This was evidently to accuse him, for "the chief Priests and Pharisees, although they fully acknowledged the convincing nature of the miracle, saying "If we let him alone, *all men will believe on him,*"—nevertheless, "from that day forth they took counsel together, for to put him to death." (John xi.) Lastly, we have a still more striking example of the same marvellous proneness to infidelity in the human heart, in the experience of our blessed Lord himself as to the faith of his own disciples, after he had risen from the grave. "The eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain, where Jesus had appointed them: and when they saw him, they worshipped him; but *some doubted.*" (Matt. xxviii. 16, 17.) This want of faith is an evidence of the obstinacy and hardness of man's heart; and it is highly sinful in the sight of God. "If I had not done among them," said our blessed Lord, "the works, which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen, and hated, both me and my Father." (John xv. 24.)

But unbelief is a *sin*, not only on the part of those, on whom the privilege was conferred, of personally witnessing his miracles;—of those, who in his own day "had seen yet hated him;" our Lord assigns to the sin of scepticism a far wider scope. Let the infidel, or the careless and indifferent professor of his faith;—let those who, as a matter of mere habit and education, as adopting the ordinary custom of their

country, indolently "profess that they know God, but *in works* deny him; (Tit. i. 16.) let those, whose daily lives and conversation, whose unrestrained thoughts and actions, prove that they "care for none of these things;" let all such consider well the awful import of those words of our Lord, in whom they at least profess to believe, which we are now about to set before them. Let them remember that, although they were not present *at* "his coming," they are living *after* "his coming;" and that they have heard and are constantly hearing *his words*. To them, then, are these his words addressed. "*If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now, they have no cloke for their sin.*" (John xv. 22.) If they reject "the robe of righteousness, the garment of salvation," (Is. lxi. 10.) which he has provided, "they have no cloke for their sin."

The faith of Abraham rested on evidence not stronger than that, which is vouchsafed to us in our day. We have "Moses," we have the "Prophets," we have at once the predictions, and their fulfilment, of those prophets, daily before our eyes in the persons of "the dispersed of Israel." Centuries have not changed the national mark, which God seems to have stamped indelibly upon the features and aspect and character of that race. They still tenaciously grasp the sacred book of the law, which was deposited in the ark of their testimony more than three thousand years ago. We see them observing their "days, and

months, and times, and years," (Gal. iv. 10.) still hugging the bondage of "Agar which is mount Sinai;" and despising their true birth-right by promise to the free-woman—the real "Jerusalem which is above." But we have not only "the goodly fellowship of the Prophets." We have also "the glorious company of the Apostles;"—the light of the gospel,—that light, which has "lightened the Gentiles,"—a light not less clear and penetrating than that, under the bright effulgence of which, Saul "fell to the earth." (Acts ix. 4.) We have "the noble army of martyrs,"—the undoubted records of faithful witnessers, who "passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone, in attestation of the accounts they delivered; and solely in consequence of their belief in those accounts." (Paley's Evidences.)

We have "the holy church throughout the world,"—a concurrence in the main foundation of our faith of communities, nations, empires, and states, from the infancy of that church, to its present wide, though still incomplete, extension.—Above all, on the united testimony of these, we have one who *has risen from the dead*. This is the great credential; the proof of all testimony, the main sheet-anchor of our hopes—for, "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and our faith is also vain." (1 Cor. xv. 14.)

We repeat then, that the faith of Abraham rested on evidence, not stronger than that which is vouch-

safed to us in our day. The promise, which he merely *received*, has been *accomplished* to us. St. Paul in the eleventh of Hebrews describes him and Sarai also, in reference to the various incidents of their history, as having "died in faith, *not having received the promises* ; but having seen them afar off ;" yet being "*persuaded* of them," and "em-
bracing them ;" "wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God." This faith of Abraham, the Apostle defines to be, not the practical certainty of the senses ; of things which actually were ; or of things which could be sensibly seen : but as the substance of things, (only) *hoped for*, the evidence of things *not seen*. It is by a faith of that kind, he says, that we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God ; so that the things which *are seen*, were not made of the things which do appear. Our Saviour himself gave us this caution against the presumption of human wisdom. "Judge not according to the *appearance*, but judge righteous judgment." (John vii. 24.) By "faith" we know that "the worlds were framed by the word of God." We receive the account of his works as He has vouchsafed to reveal it. We do not doubt the reality of his creative power and action, because the revelation which He has granted in his written word, may not explain those material laws, which He constituted, and by which He has operated. We see his works, we know that they were "not made," as to our ignorance they

"do appear." We know that the sun and the stars do not revolve round the earth, as they *"appear"* to do. We expect no revelation, and we have received no revelation of these matters ; we are content to see them, and are assured by faith that they were framed by the word of God. If natural reason could have failed to infer his eternal power and God-head from the things that are ; we have God's revealed word that all things are the work of his hands. He has caused such an account to be recorded of these, his wondrous operations, as He knew would be best calculated to the capacities of all his creatures. Faith, therefore, does not measure that account by his material laws, as He has permitted them to become developed to the inquiring eye and searching intellect of man, with other views, and for other purposes than the simple abstract knowledge of his own divine creative power. Faith does not presumptuously demand an exact scientific detail of the actual laws of gravitation, and motion, and light, and duration, and electricity, and magnetism, which would have been unintelligible when the revelation was vouchsafed, and even now to all but the smallest section of mankind. Faith does not look to revelation for the arcana of astronomy, or geology, or optics ; or for those wonderful laws, which the Creator has appointed, and by which he formed, and maintains, the universe. These secrets can be comprehended only by those few of his creatures, whom he has blessed with

endowments of a superior intellect. These things do appear and can appear as they actually are, only to those very few, who have capacities to comprehend, and industry to study them.

. To the generality of mankind the "appearances" of creation are fallacious—the "things which are seen are not made of the things which do appear." (Heb. xi. 3.) But they are not the less "framed by the word of God." It is sufficient for faith, to know, that "in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." (John i. 1, 2.) "That which may be known of God is manifest." God hath shewed it. For "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his *eternal power and godhead*." (Rom. i. 20.) Faith is satisfied with this; it is all she seeks to know from the light of nature, or from the revelation which God has granted. She receives that revelation implicitly, undoubtingly, as He has vouchsafed it; not arrogantly insisting on a minute detail, which shall be adapted to the science of the few; but humbly accepting that, which is suited to the ignorance of the many.

Let not then those, who laudably employ their talents and their time in examining the material works of God, rise from their labours, to disparage His revelation. If such there be, who pervert the

highest gifts of God, the superior endowments of intellect, into instruments of rebellion against his revealed word: "they have no cloke for their sin." Pride, luxury, and ambition are sins: but their sin is of a far more heinous character. Of them, the humble Christian may be allowed (in sorrow rather than in anger) to use the words of one, "*quem præpropere extinctum, flebant propinqui, affines, amici.*"

"Wealth, and pride, and pomp, I scorn,
But chiefly thee—
Who lift'st so high thy little horn,
Philosophy!"—

(Select poems by the late Rev. E. Barnard.

Edited by the Archdeacon Wrangham.)

Such a faith then, as the Apostle has defined, (a faith certainly grounded on credentials, not superior to those which have been vouchsafed to us,) was counted unto Abraham for righteousness. We will proceed to consider the particular circumstances under which that faith was tried.

SECTION XXXII.

The same subject continued.—Abraham's vision at Mamre a type of the sin-offering of purification: and of the gospel emancipation from the bondage of the law.

The promise of God to Abram was, in its primary sense, a temporal promise of territorial possession to himself and his descendants. The ultimate result was to be a blessing conferred on the whole race of mankind. Abram, probably, understood this universal blessing as referring to "the seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head." (Gen. iii. 15.) "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy Father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee;" "and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xii. 1.)

Abram accepted this promise of the Lord with un-

doubting faith ; and hesitated not, at once, to get him out of the country, in which his Father Terah had settled, and to abandon his kindred. The country in Mesopotamia, where Terah had founded and established his family, seems to have offered every inducement for a permanent occupation. It presented all the attraction of a quiet and settled possession ; and it possessed that especial claim to the protection and affection of Abram, which was held sacred in the early times : it contained the tombs of his Father, and of his brother Haran. But, there was no hesitation. " Abram departed as the Lord had said unto him." He probably was also aware, that Terah himself had originally designed to migrate beyond the Euphrates westward. For Terah "went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan : " although, when he "came to Haran, he dwelt there." Abram, therefore, saw in God's command the completion of his Father's first intention. We, also, may perceive, in Terah's original design, the dawn of that appointed scheme, in the Almighty's predestinated counsels, to which Abram, and not Terah, was to be directly called. When Abram arrived at Sichem, he pitched his tents there. But what were then his prospects, as to the accomplishment of the promise, in which he trusted ? His hopes of a direct and legitimate progeny rested on Sarai. " But Sarai was barren ; she had no child." He was to become " a great nation,"—But he had abandoned the land of

his father and his family, and was a stranger in the plain of Moreh. He had little prospect of an undisputed settlement then ; for " the Canaanite was then in the land." Nevertheless, for his encouragement the Lord appeared unto him again, and repeated his promise in terms still more clearly expressed. " Unto thy seed *will I give this land.*" On this announcement, he performed an act commemorative at once of his faith in the promise, and of his devotion to Him who had promised. " Then builded he an altar unto the Lord, who had appeared unto him." Did he *then* experience the commencement, at least, of that great destiny, to which he had been called? Did Sarai conceive? Did he find his position in the land becoming more inviting, more extended, more sure in his possession? The reverse was the case. He had no settled abode. The very altar, which he had raised to God was deserted; and he wandered onward to the south, to Bethel, where again he built an altar. Still there was no rest; this altar was abandoned like the former; and " he journeyed, going on still towards the south." He now encountered a most severe trial to his constancy and faith. Instead of prosperity and abundance, and the acquisition of fertile lands, he was threatened with the most dreadful of all calamities—with the horrors and destitution of famine. " There was a famine in the land: the famine was grievous in the land."

In consequence of this visitation, he was compelled

to take refuge in Egypt. What, then, was now his condition ? To how many weak mortals would the promise, under his present circumstances, have appeared only a fancy or delusion ! He had found no resting place ; and now he had been compelled to leave behind him the very country, which had been promised as the inheritance of his posterity ; and to seek an asylum in Egypt. To save his own and Sarai's life ; and the lives of Lot and his attendants ; he had crossed the border river and had placed the desert as a barrier between himself and the country of his hopes. But this discouragement, great as it must have been, was not all. A far more bitter and almost hopeless affliction befel him. Even Sarai, the essential instrument of the promise—without whom every chance of its accomplishment must vanish away—even she was taken from him. “ The Princes of Egypt saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh, and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.” Under this trial, it is clear that the faith of Abram, constant and unshaken as it had hitherto been, was still but the faith of mortal man. It had its seasons of imperfection. It betrayed a principle of weakness in all its strength. He had anticipated the probability of this calamity ; and, instead of boldly trusting in the promises and power of his God, he yielded to his fears, and even assisted by his own act the very event, which he most dreaded. To save

as he thought, his own life, he made Sarai pretend that she was his sister.

But now a slight dawn of more hopeful prospects beamed upon him. Out of evil, good came. Pharaoh restored his wife uncontaminated. "Why didst thou not tell me she was thy wife? Why said'st thou she is my sister?—so *I might* have taken her to me for my wife." He then sent Abram away and his wife, and all the cattle and wealth with which he had enriched him.

Abram now established himself once more at Bethel; and after his separation from Lot, he received a further assurance of God's promise. On this occasion the promise was so expressed as to have a double application. It referred, in the first place, to his destiny, in an ultimate and spiritual sense, as the Father of that innumerable family throughout all the world, who, in the fulness of time, should be called, by the instrumentality of his own lineal descendants, to the real knowledge of the true God. Secondly, it referred to the promise of an actual possession by his own progeny of the country, in which he was then sojourning. The first intimation, that in his "seed all the families of the earth should be blessed," was now more distinctly explained. He was allowed a clearer conception of his double destiny as Father of Israel after the flesh; and as Father of the spiritual and true Israel after the promise. It was revealed to him that his seed was destined to

comprise something beyond the numerical computation of any earthly nation. It was to be "*as the dust of the earth* ;—so that, if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." The grant was to be something more than the tenure of any earthly nations, states, or empires. It expressed something far beyond a national independence, which the Assyrian might reduce to bondage and cause to disappear ; or which the Roman might extirpate. It expressed something even beyond the borders of the most extensive and powerful empires, be they Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, or Roman which have, successively, astonished the world for a season, and passed away. The empire implied by the grant, which God made to Abram was to be unlimited in its extent ; and everlasting in its possession. It was to be a spiritual empire. He was to look for its confines to each quadrant of the globe's circle. He was to contemplate its duration beyond the revolutions of time itself. " Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place, where thou art—northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward. For all the land, which thou seest, to thee will I give it ; and to thy seed *for ever*." (*ἕως αἰῶνος*. Septuagint.) The last expression marks beyond all doubt the previous words " all the land which thou seest," " northward and southward, and eastward, and westward," as conveying not a literal and temporal, but a prophetic and spiritual

intention. The temporal and limited scene, as we have shewn elsewhere, is conveyed in the less emphatic terms which follow. "Walk through the land in the length of it, and the breadth of it, for I will *give it unto thee.*" It is not improbable that, when Abram was commanded to lift up his eyes, and to look from the place where he stood, towards the four quarters of the earth, that the land stretched out before his view was a vision similar to that, which our blessed Lord is represented to have miraculously or spiritually beheld in Matthew iv. 8.—when the devil shewed him, from an "exceeding high mountain, all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them."

The next incident, in the probation of Abram's faith, is that of his remarkable interview with Melchisedek, (Gen. xiv.) on which we have already commented so much at large, when we considered its typical signification. It is no less striking as a test of Abram's faith in the promise. He was just returned in triumph from an encounter with some of the heathen Princes of the land. He had received the homage of the king of Sodom ; and Melchisedek had attended him expressly to offer his own congratulations on the success of his expedition. Yet, at this moment of gratifying exultation, when a victor would be disposed rather to exact submission from others, than to offer it himself ; Abram, with all humility, accepted a blessing from him, who was king of Salem, and Priest of the most High God. By

this act he acknowledged in the most unqualified manner his own spiritual inferiority ; and, as a further confirmation of that inferiority, he tendered to Melchisedek the tithe of the spoils which he had taken. St. Paul explains to the Hebrews, that the blessing, which Melchisedek conferred, had respect to the *promise*, which was the foundation of all Abram's hopes. " He blessed him, that had the promises." Thus Abram, by accepting that blessing, and offering the tithes, shewed his full reliance on the promise, although, hitherto, no portion of it had been accomplished ; no symptom of it had appeared. But something more than this was also expressed. By so acting, he acknowledged the *Priesthood* of Melchisedek. He recognised the High Priest of an *order*, in which neither he, nor his future expected descendants, would have any *dignity*. He knew, that he himself was the stock, from whence future generations were to proceed, in number like the dust of the earth. They were to inherit the vast regions, which his vision had revealed, of which the district of Salem itself was a most especial part. Was not then the Priesthood of that vast congregation to be looked for from the midst of the congregation itself ? Was He, the representative, and first origin of this comprehensive destiny, to accept, as " the lesser," a blessing from this king and Priest of Salem, as " the better ?" (For without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. Heb. vii. 7.) Was he to render tribute

to this king and Priest of the small city of Salem, and humbly to bend to his blessing, whose very inheritance was to pass to his own children? Yes!—and, in so acting, he clearly proved that he comprehended the full scope of the promise, which he had received; and of the vision, which he had witnessed. He viewed in Melchisedek the earnest of an higher Priesthood than any order of that sacred office, which was to be consecrated in the line of his own children's children. This conclusion rests on no fancy or forced construction of the writer. Who shall gainsay the words of him who declared—"Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." (John viii. 56.) The priesthood of Him, who thus spake, existed in its representative Melchisedek, even when that of the order of Aaron, and the tribe of Levi, was yet in the loins of Abram himself. Of that Priesthood Melchisedek was vicegerent; and to his consecration Abram bowed, not in ignorance, but in faith. He rejoiced to perceive its full development from its representation in the king of Salem, leaping over an interval of 2000 years, to its perfect consummation on earth, in the person of Christ. "He rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Why? Because he knew that in Melchisedek was revealed that real divine Priesthood, which, even then, at that very hour, was ministering to the salvation of the world in the presence of Almighty God, whose humble instrument alone Abram

was.—“ Before Abraham was, I AM.” He prophetically beheld that future day, when that same true and only divine Priesthood should on earth, also, assert its pre-eminence over his own seed after the flesh : and should establish the true righteousness ; the righteousness to which he had made no claim, but which God had graciously *imputed* to him—namely the righteousness which *is of Faith* ; which *worketh by love*, and which has made all men “ *dead to the law, by the body of Christ.*” (Rom. vii. 4.)

This interview with Melchisedek was, as it were, the seal of testimony as to the genuineness of Abram’s faith. Yet, hitherto, no decisive event had occurred as the commencement towards its accomplishment. The next stage, in the particulars of his history, shews how acceptable in the sight of God this evidence of his faith had been. “ After these things, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying—fear not Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” (Gen. xv. 1.) We shall see how speedily this “ great reward ” was actually conferred. Abram had no distrust ; his faith was explicit. Yet he could not see, by any external proofs, the inchoative process, as it were, of the promise, either as to issue, or territory. He was anxious, to know in what manner a promise, on which he fully relied, would be effected. “ Lord God,” he said, “ I go childless—behold, to me thou hast given no seed. Lo ! one born in my house is my heir.” This

was no question prompted by distrust ; but merely a supplication for a more distinct explanation, if it so pleased his Almighty benefactor. This is clearly shewn by that, which follows. God fully explained, that one born in Abram's house, a mere son by adoption, was not to be the promised seed ; but his own real and legitimate offspring. The Lord answered—“ this shall not be thine heir ; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.” And, again, he “ brought him forth abroad, and said, look now toward Heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them : and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be.” (Gen. xv. 5.) “ And he believed in the Lord,” and immediately received the exceeding great reward. “ He believed in the Lord, and *he counted it to him for righteousness.*” He received that greatest of all blessings—*justification by Faith.* He received it from Him, whose divine High Priesthood he had seen, and acknowledged, as represented by the typical consecration of the king of Salem ; whose future High Priesthood on earth he beheld, through the vista of two thousand years to come. Yes ! “ He rejoiced to see that glorious day ; and he saw it, and was glad ! ” This faith was “ *counted to him for righteousness.* ” It was not a righteousness, which he could claim as a personal merit of his own. “ There is none that doeth good—no not one.” (Ps. xiv. 3.) “ There is none good but one—that is God.” (Matt. xix. 17.)

Righteousness must be *imputed*, it cannot be inherent. The reward is of *grace*, not of works. It is not abstract faith, which justifies; but "belief in Him, that *justifieth* the ungodly." (Rom. iv. 5.) This is the faith, which is counted for righteousness.

The next incident in this vision, at which we arrive, relates, not so much to the spiritual destiny of Abram, as to his temporal and actual possession of the land, in which he was then residing only as a sojourner. "I am the Lord, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land." Here, again, Abram, who, as yet, had possession, rather by sufferance, than of right, even in the plain of Mamre, where he had built an altar unto the Lord, wished to have some indication of his future establishment in the country. He asked for some sensible token. "Lord God! whereby shall I know, that I shall inherit it?" As if he had said, I trust in thy promise, but to that promise wilt thou vouchsafe to add some sensible sign, which may mark the progress of its fulfilment? The requiring a sign may be instigated by two very distinct and different principles. It may be the presumptuous requisition of incredulity; or it may proceed from sincere faith, merely seeking some means, by which to know the process of events to come. Thus, when the Scribes and Pharisees demanded of our Lord, saying, "Master, we would see a sign from thee." This was an act of defiance; the taunt of contemptuous scepticism. Our Lord con-

sequently reproved it in these words, "an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." (Matt. xii. 38.) But, it was not a spirit of unbelief, but merely one of inquiry, which induced his disciples to ask him "privately—Tell us, when shall these things be; and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matt. xxiv. 8.) The destruction of their temple and of the Jewish state had been foretold, and they asked for some token, by which they might judge of its approach. Our Lord does not upbraid them for these questions, but proceeds to caution them against the deceptions of false pretenders; and against erroneous inferences from political events. These, he assures them, will be no indications of an approaching end of the world, and final judgment. He therefore counsels them, to draw no such inference from that dreadful destruction of their city and temple, which some of them should live to witness: but to take care for their personal safety, and escape. He also gives them one certain sign, by which they shall at least know, when the end is *not* at hand—"This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached *in all the world*, for *a witness unto all nations*, and then (that is not before) shall the end come."

It was evidently in a spirit of simple inquiry, that Abram, who was at that time childless, and nearly a hundred years old, having also no territory in the land, which he could call his own, put this question

to God; "*whereby* shall I know, that I shall inherit it?" The Almighty vouchsafed an answer to his appeal. He directed him first, to offer up a sacrifice of a peculiar nature; and he subsequently caused a vision to appear before him. The Lord said unto him—"Take me an heifer of three years old; and a she-goat of three years old; and a ram of three years old: and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon." "And he took him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not." To this sacrifice there was a special numeral applied. There were to be *three* animals; and each animal was to be *three* years old. The sacrificial ceremony, as all acknowledge, originated, from its earliest institution by Abel, as a type of the great sacrifice, by which "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." That great and final sacrifice was accomplished in three days. Whether the number three, so remarkably applied on this occasion, was intended significantly in reference to this, or to any other point in divine revelation, the reader will exercise his own judgment.

The three three-yearling animals were a sacrifice. The turtle-dove and young pigeon evidently represented the "sin-offering," which was, in after years, ordained by the law of Moses—namely "a lamb, or *two turtle doves, or young pigeons.*" (Lev. xii. 6.) This latter part then, is a clear, direct, and substantial prophecy of a particular ceremony in the law,

which was to be announced four hundred years after the time of Abram. What was the object of that particular offering? It was the offering of purification, *for the birth of a son* or daughter. Here then was a sign, by which was revealed to Abram, one peculiar feature in the ceremonial law, which should be enjoined on his descendants; and in connection with that special ceremony, he celebrated, as it were by anticipation, the birth of his own promised heir. He was required to make the offering of purification, before the child was born.

In like manner, the paschal "Lamb" of the Israelites denoted the offering of purification for the *child which should be born*: as well as the atoning sacrifice of Him, that should be offered up for the sins of all mankind. It shewed forth the *new birth* unto righteousness; as well as the *death* unto sin. Thus, this offering by Abram of a turtle-dove and young pigeon (the prescribed substitutes for the lamb) was at once a figurative and anticipated consummation of his own promised issue; a prophetic image of the law to come; and a perspective vision of that blessed *birth* and *sacrifice*, to which all three preparatory emblems ultimately tended. We can hardly doubt, that the significance of this offering, in the several respects to which we have referred, was made known to, and understood by the patriarch, to whom so much had already been revealed,

"Your father Abram rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad."

But there is another most remarkable circumstance attending this offering. The heifer, the she-goat, and the ram were "*divided in the midst, and laid each piece one against another*:" but the birds divided he not." The two last, as we have seen, had their own peculiar signification. What then was intended by the *division* of the animals? We learn from the xxxivth chapter of Jeremiah, that by the Jewish customs, when a slave was liberated, the covenant of separation between the bondsman and his master, was confirmed by the sacrifice of a calf, which "was cut in twain;" and the master passed between the divided parts; thus confirming as it were, by a personal act, the symbol of a complete independence between himself and the slave, whom he had manumitted.

When Abram had arranged the whole offering in the way described, "a deep sleep fell upon him." And now, what was the vision which he beheld? In the first place, God announced to him a most important calamity, to which his posterity was destined for a long period of time. He had looked for their triumphant and undisturbed possession of the land, in which he was. But God now said unto him, "Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years." He

afterwards consoles him with a knowledge of their ultimate deliverance and prosperity. "In the fourth generation they shall come hither again." Nevertheless, the knowledge of the intended captivity of his race was a deep affliction to Abram, "a horror of great darkness fell upon him." Possibly, the prophetic vision, with which God had inspired him, revealed, not only the actual temporal bondage of his descendants, but that spiritual bondage, of which their captivity in Egypt was a type. Perhaps, he perceived the full meaning—the spiritual, as well as the temporal, condition to which his nation was destined. Perhaps, he beheld, not only the bondage in Egypt, but the bondage of the law. Perhaps he clearly understood, that the imputed righteousness of *Faith*, which worketh by love, of which blessing he had been the first fruits, as it were, and the great example,—was not to be the righteousness which his children would seek after. Perhaps, he mourned that the example which he had set, would not be the rule of faith to the people, which were to issue from his loins. He saw, perhaps, the stumbling-stone, on which they would fall—that they would rest on the righteousness which is by works of the law; and thus, that they would be a people fallen from grace, "*grace*," the value of which he had so fully partaken. At such a prospect, it may well be understood, why "a horror of great darkness" fell upon him.

There was, however, yet another scene in this sacrificial vision. "It came to pass that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a *smoking furnace*, and a *burning lamp*," that passed between those pieces. A smoking furnace, and a burning lamp *passed between the divided pieces*. Here was the very covenant of separation, as recorded in Jeremiah! It was the ceremony of emancipation; the peculiar Jewish form, by which liberty was conferred on bondage. It was the covenant of enfranchisement, to which there must be two parties, the former master, and the new freed-man. How were these two parties indicated in the vision? Who can doubt that the visionary smoke of the furnace, which Abram saw *passing between* the divided "heifer" (or "*calf*,") and the she-goat, and ram, was afterwards actually seen by a sensible demonstration on mount Sinai, which gendereth unto bondage? Who can fail to see the antitype of the "smoking furnace" foreshewn to Abram, when "the Lord descended upon the mountain in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace." (Ex. xix. 18.) The thunders and the sound of the trumpet which were then heard, announced the bondage of the law, and introduced the "school-master," who, after a long probationary period of discipline and pupillage, was at last, to bring Jew and Gentile into that glorious liberty, with which Christ, "the light of the world," has "made us free." The emblem of this liberty, of

this perfect emancipation, appeared also, passing between the divided sacrifice of Abram. There was also "a burning lamp, that passed between those pieces." This was that burning lamp, of which Isaiah speaks (lxii. 1.) "The righteousness thereof (shall) go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." This lamp of righteousness and salvation was then fully displayed, when Jesus spake, saying, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John viii. 12.) And again—"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." (John xii. 46.)

SECTION XXXIII.

The test of Abraham's faith continued. Hagar, a type of the covenant of Sinai: Sarah, of the covenant of grace. Circumcision, a token of the covenant of promise, not of the law.

Hitherto, the promised seed had not been distinctly assigned to any offspring from Sarai. It was to proceed from Abram, but the Mother had not been named. "He, that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." This was all that had been hitherto announced. Sarai herself considered her sterility as hopeless; and recommended to Abram the adoption of her hand-maid, Hagar the Egyptian. That this event was by permission of God, is evident. He sent his angel, to encourage and console Hagar, when she was driven away by Sarai, and rested "by a fountain in the wilderness, in the way to Shur." (Gen. xvi. 7.)

The Angel promised that Agar's seed should be "multiplied exceedingly, that it should not be num-

bered for multitude." We have in another place adverted to the twelve Princes, who descended from Ishmael, Hagar's son ; and the fulfilment of this prediction by the people of Arabia has been noticed by all commentators. But, the destiny of Hagar has a less obvious, but a most important spiritual signification, which is clearly set forth by St. Paul. It is most remarkable that, although Sarai was really destined to be the Mother of the promised seed, through her own posterity, and by the instrumentality of her children's children, as Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews ; although they, her own descendants through fifteen hundred years of time, were the depositaries of the law ;—its strictly enjoined subjects ;—its ministers, and the appointed guardians of its sanctuary ;—nevertheless Sarai, as the "*free-woman*," and the *Mother of the promise*, *did not represent that law*. It was represented—not by her, the *free-woman*,—but by *Hagar the bond-woman*. The whole history of Abram is one continued prophecy, not only by direct announcement from God, but by numerous events and incidents of his life, having a clear typical application to the all-sufficient atonement by the promised seed, who should offer himself as a sin-offering for all mankind ; and should by his free grace, abolish the moral and ceremonial law of works ; and establish the imputed righteousness of faith, which worketh by love. Sarai was a type of this new covenant ; Hagar was a type

of the old, and hence St. Paul tells us that "these things are an allegory." (Gal. iv. 24.)

They are all typical of Abram's destiny, as Father of the faithful in Christ Jesus, to whose day he looked, to whose second covenant he was a party, rather than to the first and introductory covenant of the law. Of these two covenants, the Apostle says, "the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, is *Agar*. For this *Agar* is mount Sinai in *Arabia*, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children.' *Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia!* This is most marvellous! The descendants of Sarai, they who *received* the law, are nevertheless *not* the children of one who was a *type of the law*. But she is a type of the Law, who was mother of the cast-out Ishmaelites—the children of bondage. As a perfect illustration of this, God delivered the law itself from Sinai, a mountain in *Arabia*, the very country which was inhabited by the Arabs, the posterity of Hagar? But the covenant of promise, was by the free-woman; (Sarai) and she represents the Jerusalem which is above, "which is free, and which is the mother of us all." "Which things are an allegory." Let us then examine this allegory a little closer.

As the Mother of the covenant of legal bondage was driven into the wilderness by the Mother of the covenant of grace;—so have the children of the law been driven out of the land of promise, and been dispersed throughout the wilderness of the world. But

the angel of the Lord said unto Agar, when she was by a *fountain of water* in the wilderness—"Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands." So, we know by the word of prophecy, that, in the fulness of time, the children of bondage shall at length be called to return to the bosom of their true Mother—the Mother of the promise. Their "casting away has been the reconciling of the world"—"what then shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead." (Rom. xi. 15.) When they shall be thus again "received;"—when, like Agar, though scattered in the wilderness, they shall at length rest by a *fountain in that wilderness*—the "*fountain* opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness," (Zech. xiii. 1.) when they shall look to "the Alpha and Omega," who will give unto him that is athirst of "the water of life freely," (Rev. xxii. 17.) of which he that drinketh shall never thirst;—but it shall be unto him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life," (John iv. 14.)—then, in that great day, shall the Angel's prophecy to Hagar be accomplished in those, who had so long rested on the law of Sinai, which she represented. "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." Then also will the prophecy of Ezekiel be completed, "the stick of Judah and the stick of Ephraim shall be joined one to another unto *one stick*, and they shall become *one*." "For, thus saith the Lord God,

the angel of the Lord said unto Agar, when she was by a *fountain of water* in the wilderness—"Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands." So, we know by the word of prophecy, that, in the fulness of time, the children of bondage shall at length be called to return to the bosom of their true Mother—the Mother of the promise. Their "casting away has been the reconciling of the world"—"what then shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead." (Rom. xi. 15.) When they shall be thus again "received;"—when, like Agar, though scattered in the wilderness, they shall at length rest by a *fountain in that wilderness—the "fountain* opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness," (Zech. xiii. 1.) when they shall look to "the Alpha and Omega," who will give unto him that is athirst of "the water of life freely," (Rev. xxii. 17.) of which he that drinketh shall never thirst;—but it shall be unto him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life," (John iv. 14.)—then, in that great day, shall the Angel's prophecy to Hagar be accomplished in those, who had so long rested on the law of Sinai, which she represented. "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." Then also will the prophecy of Ezekiel be completed, "the stick of Judah and the stick of Ephraim shall be joined one to another unto *one stick*, and they shall become *one*." "For, thus saith the Lord God,

behold ! I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone : and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land." " And David * my servant shall be king over them ; and they all shall have one Shepherd." " Moreover, I will make *a covenant of peace* with them ;" " it shall be *an everlasting covenant* with them." " My *servant David* shall be their Prince *for ever.*" (Ezek. xxxvii. 17, &c.)

This shall be the blessed condition of the Jews, as well as Gentiles, when, as their prototype Hagar rested by the fountain of Shur, they shall rest by that fountain, where true refreshment only can be found ; the " fountain for sin and for uncleanness ;" those " living fountains of water, unto which the Lamb shall lead them." Then will they understand, in its true sense, why Hagar was made to give to the well of her resting-place the name, " Beer-la-ha-roi " (the well of him, that liveth, and seeth me.) For, though their " eyes be still blinded," and their " hearts hardened," (John xii. 40.) yet, then, " shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped ;" " for in the *wilderness* shall waters break out, and streams in the *desert.*" (Is. xxxv. 6.) As Hagar returned to her mistress, so " the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come

* David here clearly means Christ, the Son of David. Ezekiel wrote 400 years after David lived.

to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Is. xxxv. 10.)

We find a repetition of the same figure in the incidents of Hagar's history, when she was again driven into the wilderness with her son Ishmael. On that occasion, also, "God opened her eyes, and she saw a *well of water*; and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink; and God was with the lad." The promise was then also renewed, "I will make him a great nation." (Gen. xxi. 19.)

When Abram was ninety and nine years old, God vouchsafed again to renew his promise, and to add to it three important particulars. It is evident, that the Almighty thought fit to test the constancy and sincerity of Abram's faith to the utmost, by deferring the birth of a legitimate son by Sarai, until he was a hundred years old, and his wife ninety. It is at least doubtful, whether, under these circumstances, so contrary to the ordinary course of nature, the faith of Abram did not partake, in some degree, of human infirmity. "O that *Ishmael* might live before thee!" is an exclamation, which certainly seems to indicate incredulity, when "he laughed and said in his heart—Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarai, that is ninety years old, bear?"—Commentators have considered this laughter and expression of surprise, as proceeding from joy and exultation, rather than from mistrust. Whether

it arose from infirmity or gladness, God was graciously pleased to shew no displeasure. He condescended to repeat his assurance—"Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed!" and thou shalt call his name "Isaac." (laughter.)

This name, which God conferred on Abraham's heir, was most significant. It shewed forth those "glad tidings," which Gabriel announced to Zacharias, (Luke i. 19.)—"those good tidings of great joy to all people" which the angels proclaimed to the shepherds—that most consoling blessing, which our Lord himself pronounced—"Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall *laugh*." (Luke vi. 21.)

But God not only declared the name, which the promised heir should bear; he also gave a more extended signification to the names of Abram himself, and Sarai. The interpretation of Abram is "a high Father;" but he was now to be called "Abraham," "the Father of a great multitude." His original name referred to the temporal dignity, to which he was appointed, as the "high Father" of that nation, which was to spring from his own loins. But the Jews, though born in the direct line of Abraham, "because they are the seed of Abraham, are not all children." That is, they are not, on account of their *descent only, children of the promise*: "but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." (Rom. ix. 7, 8.)

Therefore, the Patriarch was further distinguished by the change of his name to "Abraham," as "Fa-

ther of a great multitude," of that great multitude, the future children of the promise—that "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who should ascribe "salvation," (not unto the law, but) "unto our God, and unto the Lamb." (Rev. vii. 9, 10.)

With a view to the same double destiny, temporal and spiritual, the name "Sarai," (which simply signifies "my Lady—my Princess" in reference to her descendants after the flesh,) was changed to "Sarah," "the Princess of the multitude." "I will bless her," saith the Lord, "and give thee also a son of her: yea I will bless her, and she shall be a Mother of nations: *kings of people* shall be of her." "I will establish my covenant with him, (that is Isaac) for an *everlasting covenant*, and with his seed after him." (Gen. xvii. 19.)

This remarkable and prophetic change of names; and the promise of Isaac by Sarah, are two of the three particular points to which we have referred in this conference between God, and his servant Abraham. The third was the ordinance of circumcision as a token of this glorious covenant. This ordinance was to be observed with respect to every male child in all the generations of the Hebrews, and Ishmaelites, and so it has continued to this day. What then, was the "covenant" between Almighty God and "Abraham," "the Father of a great multitude," of which this rite of circumcision was a

token, or signet. The covenant was this—"Thy name shall not any more be called "Abram" (a high Father merely)—but Abraham ("the Father of a great multitude.") "I will make thee *exceeding* fruitful. A Father of *many nations* have I made thee," (not of the Hebrew nation only) "I will make *nations* of thee, (not one nation) and kings shall come out of thee." This covenant was to be "an *everlasting covenant*"—"to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee,"—namely the seed of "many nations, and kings,"—(the children of the promise.)

Thus "circumcision" was a token of the covenant of promise. This was its ultimate and spiritual object. It served, also, with a temporal and primary view, to mark the lineal descendants of Abraham, as a distinct people from the idolatrous nations by whom they were surrounded. The Israelites, however, while they adhered scrupulously to the token, lost sight of the covenant which it attested; while they venerated, with national pride and gratitude, their forefather, they considered him rather as "Abram," the "high Father" of their own race exclusively, and rejected the purport of that far higher title, by which he was known to them—Abraham—the "Father of a great multitude,"—of the countless children of the promise.

They considered themselves, (though they were the mere instruments by which the covenant was to

be accomplished,) not as the *means*, (which they were) but the *end*, (which they were not.) They regarded circumcision as their own sole and peculiar distinction, as a token of a temporal covenant, of national existence and dominion, granted to them by Jehovah through their Father Abraham. They knew, but they did not consider, that "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness, *not* when he was in *circumcision*, but in *uncircumcision*." (Rom. iv. 10.)

This *imputation* of righteousness, as the effect of faith, by which "iniquities are forgiven" and "sins covered," was the great object of the whole promise. This gift of free grace was granted to Abraham *before circumcision was instituted*. That rite was a ratification of *righteousness by faith*. "He received the sign of circumcision, a *seal of the righteousness of the faith* which he had, *yet being uncircumcised*:" "that he might be" (not Abram, the high Father of the Jews,) but *Abraham*, "the Father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the *righteousness of Faith*." "To the end, the promise might be sure to *all* the seed,; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also, which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the Father of us all." (Rom. iv. 11—16.) Thus circumcision was, in its real and ultimate object, a

token of *the new covenant of the gospel*, and *not of the old covenant of the law*.

Though the covenant of grace was not consummated until the actual appearance of Christ, sixteen hundred years after the law was delivered to Moses ; yet, it was not only prefigured, and predicted, but actually promulgated to Abraham, and attested by the sign of circumcision. In proof of this, we cannot too often quote our blessed Lord's words—"Your Father Abraham rejoiced to *see my day*, and he saw it, and was glad."

Thus, in spirit and in faith, Abraham was a christian by anticipation. He fulfilled the christian law of faith, which worketh by love ; and he received the christian's reward, imputed righteousness. He prophetically celebrated, at once, the birth of his own son of the promise, and also of that son, who should accomplish the promise, when he offered the turtle-dove and young pigeon, as a sin-offering at Mamre. He proclaimed that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free from the yoke of legal bondage, when he divided the heifer, and the goat, and the ram, on the altar, at his vision. And, finally, knowing, by the Spirit of God, that, "without shedding of blood" as an atonement to the satisfaction of infinite justice, "there is no remission," (Heb. ix. 22.) he performed that great act of faith, the preparing to offer his own son Isaac, as a sacrifice, when commanded by God to do so. Thus Abraham was a christian, in faith, by

practice, and in reward ; shewing forth, in the various incidents of his life, the future consummation of that perfect revelation to come, which he partook of by anticipation. Abraham was the first christian—a Hebrew christian. Though the Father of Israel, he was *not an Israelite*. The descendants of Jacob are perfectly distinct from the two first Patriarchs. It seems to have been for the purpose of marking that distinction, that God made the promise separately and distinctly to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The two first established the real covenant of grace. The last provided the instrumental means of its fulfilment, by the birth of his twelve sons, from whom *Israel* as a nation proceeded. Abraham, though the ancestor of that people, was not of their *nation*. Though the ancestor of the Jews, he was not a *Jew*. Though he sojourned in the land of the twelve tribes, he had no territorial dominion there. This was one very trying test of his faith. Although God so repeatedly promised “ that he would give it to him for a possession,” the actual possession was “ to his seed after him,” rather than to himself personally : for “ he had none *inheritance* in it ; no not so much as to set his foot on.” (Acts vii. 5.) Thus, “ he received the sign of circumcision, as the father (not of the law) but, “ of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised.” (Rom. iv. 11.) He received circumcision, precisely as “ Christ also was a minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to *confirm the pro-*

mises. (Rom. xv. 8.) "That covenant with Abraham which was confirmed of God in Christ ; the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul." (Gal. iii. 17.) It was a covenant, established and in force, long before the law was ordained. Circumcision, therefore, was clearly *no seal or token of the law.*

Thus, the Jews still perpetuate a custom, which had no reference to their law, but was a token of the covenant of grace by the gospel. With surprising inconsistency, they *retain the seal*, while they *reject the deed.*

They acknowledge, and venerate Abraham as their Father, though he had no part in that religion of the law of works, to which they adhere, after it has performed its intended office, and on which they still depend. They call him "Father Abraham"—but they repudiate his faith, his religion, his covenant ; and they see, in the promises, which God made to all mankind, through him and them, a promise limited to *themselves* and their mere territorial possession of the land of Canaan. But the day will come, when, as true children of Abraham, they will embrace the religion, and the faith of Abraham. The day will come, when they will relinquish their reliance on the mere instrumental and temporal ordinances of their law, and will "rejoice," as Abraham did, "to see the day of Christ ;—they will see it ; and be glad." (See Appendix, Note C.)

It is marvellous, that the Jews should so long have continued that, which they really are ;—*apostates* from the religion and the faith of their own progenitor :—that they should persevere in repudiating that gracious revelation, which had been so fully made known to him, and by him. It is marvellous that they should reject the example of their forefather, and adhere, solely, to Moses, who was their divinely-appointed minister, for temporary, and intermediate purposes only. It is the more marvellous, because Moses, himself, abjured all pretension to any other than a vicarial authority. He explicitly tells them, that their final obedience must be directed to one, who should come after him, from their own nation, “ The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me : unto *him* ye shall hearken.” (Deut. xviii. 15.) Marvellous it is, that they do not yet perceive, that “ those things, which God before had shewed, by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.” (Acts iii. 18.)

How is it, that these things, which we have feebly attempted to set forth, with the light of the New as well as the Old Testament before us, were so clearly, and so fully perceived and explained by their own countryman Stephen, who upbraided them ; that, though “ they had received the law by the disposition of angels, they had not kept it,” (they had mistaken its spirit and intent)—“ and slain them, which

shewed before of the coming of the Just one, of whom they were the betrayers and murderers?" (Acts vii. 53.)

How is it, that these things, which require some degree of close inspection into Holy Writ, were known to, and thoroughly understood by, their countryman, the fisherman of Galilee? But, above all, how is it, that they were known to Saul of Tarsus! Saul the *Pharisee*! Saul, who had been the most rigid and zealous observer of all their laws and customs, until a new light broke upon him? How was it that he, who, "after the strictest sect of his religion, lived a Pharisee,"—who was expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews; submitted to "stand and be judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto his Father?" What was it which prompted him to deny the righteousness which is by works of his own law—a law, in which he was so well versed, to which he was attached with the most inveterate prejudice and bigotry, and by the most powerful ties of national and historical pride; to disparage the righteousness of this law; and proclaim the forgotten law of his first ancestor Abraham—the law of righteousness imputed to faith, which worketh by love? How came it, that Saul, a Pharisee! set forth this doctrine; brought it to light from the depth of two thousand years of darkness, and proclaimed it to the wonder and indignation of his offended countrymen? Was there any

human inducement, which could have worked in him this surprising change? He had not, like Peter, been associated with Christ on earth. He had no previous convictions. So much the reverse, that the pretensions of the crucified Jesus, as a prophet sent by God, were an abomination in his sight; insomuch, that "he verily thought that *he ought* to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." "He shut up many saints in prison; and, when they were put to death, he gave his vote against them." "He punished them oft in every synagogue, and *compelled them to blaspheme*; and, being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them even unto strange cities." (Acts xxvi. 6—11.)

How came this man, who was the most zealous of all enthusiasts for the law, and the traditions of his sect and nation, suddenly to appear before his own countrymen, preaching, with all the energy and conviction in a new cause, which he had before shewn in the old,—“Christ crucified—Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God! Christ—to the Jews a stumbling-block; and to the Greeks foolishness?” (1 Cor. i. 23, 24.)

What was his inducement, thus to incur the contempt of the learned; and the vindictive fury of the people and their rulers? Were the bonds, imprisonments, stripes and persecutions, which he had himself so abundantly inflicted on others, and which he knew he should undergo in his own person; were

these the temptations which led him to abandon all his former convictions, and his strongest prejudices? Such a change, in such a man, could have been effected by no other means than those, which he avowed—namely, a conversion effected by a miracle—the adoption of a commission directly appointed by the voice of God our Saviour himself. His eyes and his ears, his heart and his understanding, were opened to that mid-day light and voice, which sent him, “to open (on his part) the eyes of the Gentiles; to turn them from darkness to light; and from the power of Satan to God.” That they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith.” (Acts xxvi. 18.)

SECTION XXXIV.

The secondary causes assigned to the extension of Christianity, inapplicable to the conversion of St. Paul, and to the Apostolic Church.—Crowning test of Abraham's faith.

The elegant but insidious historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, has assigned five secondary causes as sufficient, humanly speaking, to account for the propagation and extension of the Christian religion. They are,

I. The inflexible and intolerant zeal of the Christians.

II. The doctrine of a future life.

III. The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive church.

IV. The pure and austere morals of the Christians.

V. The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent

and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire." (Decline and Fall, &c. c. xv.)

It was evidently the object of this learned writer, to shew, if possible, that the power of Christianity may be accounted for by the circumstances of the time; and the natural desires and motives, which influence the human mind, in a progressive state of civilization. But could Mr. Gibbon, with all his research, ingenuity, and cold philosophy, assign *one* cause, not for the propagation, but for the *origin* of the Christian religion?

The proud historian condescends to notice Christianity, when it has become the state religion of Imperial Rome; when he finds it enthroned at Constantinople. But he is silent at the period when it exhibited its greatest marvel, in the Roman province of Judæa, under Augustus and Tiberius. We ask not for five causes: but, we repeat, could his utmost skill have discovered *one* plausible cause arising from human motives and human actions, which could account for the conversion and subsequent ministry, sufferings, and *doctrines* of the persecuting Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus? Could he have found one probable human cause, to explain how he, who had so implicitly confided in the fleshly ordinances of his law, suddenly relinquished all pretensions to their efficacy? "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh," (says St. Paul) "I more."
"Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel,

of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews ; as touching the law, a Pharisee ;" " concerning zeal, persecuting the Church ; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Could Mr. Gibbon have enlightened the world with one specious reason of an ordinary nature, to explain, how this rigid zealot came to consider all these things as of no intrinsic value ; as mere " loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord ?" What single worldly reason can be assigned, why this devotee to the law of Moses, should have suddenly lent all his energies, to throw down the gorgeous ceremonial fabric of his national religion, to dive, as it were, into the inmost cavity of its foundation-stone, which had rested unnoticed for two thousand years, and to take thereout the ancient sterling coin, which God had caused to be placed in it, by his servant Abraham ? How came he to decypher this forgotten legend on that coin, "*Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law ; but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God, by faith ?*"

How came Paul to decypher this legend through the rust of two thousand years ; to abandon the congregation of Moses, and to join himself to the real and true primitive Church of his forefather Abraham ? How came he to consider the possession of this foundation coin to be a gain, for which he was content " to suffer the loss of all things, and

to count them but dung?" How came he to be, (not only willing but) anxious to relinquish all the satisfactions and pleasures of the world; all its ease, all its temporal enjoyments and comforts; that he might encounter "the fellowship of the sufferings, and be made conformable to the death" of Jesus—the despised carpenter's son, whom he had persecuted? St. Paul has himself furnished an answer to these questions. The great end, which he proposed to himself for all these sacrifices was this—"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. iii. 4—11.)

Does he then come under the second head of Mr. Gibbon's secondary causes? Had he studied the philosophy of Socrates and Plato? was this the hope by which he was so strongly influenced? what connection had these speculations with "Christ crucified?" He might have indulged reveries on the immortality of the soul, on Pharisaical or Pagan principles; and yet have continued to persecute, with all his power, that resurrection of Christ, which he had been firmly persuaded was a mere imposture. What then was it which made Paul suddenly "know *Him* and the power of *His* resurrection?" (Phil. iii. 10.)

Can we cull from Mr. Gibbon's five causes a single one, which will answer this question?

We see in St. Paul, a Pharisee; we see in St. Peter, a Jew, both living in the last times when Judæa was a Roman province; we see in these men,

and we read in their writings, the Christianity of Abraham accomplished. For the universal propagation of this faith, Paul was an apostle specially commissioned to the Gentiles. To this end he was selected from the tribe of Benjamin, the brother of Joseph, for whom the stick of Ephraim was marked as distinct from that of Judah, and who inherited the birth-right from Reuben. Paul, the Benjamite, proclaimed to the Gentiles the promise given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—"In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

But to return to Abraham. The last and crowning test of Abraham's faith, (after the long-delayed promise of a son by Sarai had been, at length, accomplished,) was the offering that very son, by God's command, as a burnt-sacrifice, on mount Moriah. On this most trying occasion, there was no infirmity, or human weakness displayed. The faith of Abraham was now confident and triumphant. It received its reward by a new and still more emphatic promise of the blessing. "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son ;"—"in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore : and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies," (the children of the Promise shall supersede the children of the Law,) and thus—"in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. xxii. 16—18.)

The protracted period, to which the birth of the promised son was postponed, seems to have had another intent, besides that of a test to Abraham's faith. It had possibly a typical reference to the long interval; no less than 2000 years, which was to elapse, before "He should come in the flesh," whose day Abraham had rejoiced to see, and was glad." As the long-deferred birth had been a test to the constancy of Abraham's faith,—so might this lapse of ages have been a test to the faith of his children's children.

But how different was the result ! They mistook the sign for the object itself;—the token for the reality. They "believed not the report;" and saw not "the arm of the Lord revealed." Like the "evil servant," they "said in their heart, our Lord delayeth his coming." Therefore they began to smite their fellow-servants; and to eat and drink and be drunken, with their heathen neighbours. Thus, the advent of Shiloh grew up before them "as a tender plant" (of the slowest growth,) "as a root out of a dry ground." And when at length their Lord did come, "it was in a day when they looked not for him; and in an hour that they were not aware of." (Matt. xxiv. 48.) Then, "he was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. They hid, as it were, their faces from him: he was despised, and they esteemed him not." They saw in him no "comeliness; nor beauty that they should desire him." (Is. liii. 1—3.)

As it was with the Jews of old—so, even in these times, it is to be feared that there are many, who, in the expectation of our Lord's second advent, are disposed to say—"Where is the promise of his coming?—for, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter iii. 4.)

May Almighty God, of his infinite mercy and goodness, grant, that, by the grace of his Holy Spirit, we may be enabled to "walk in the steps of that faith of *our* Father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised." "Who, against hope, believed in hope;" "and, being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, when he was about an hundred years old; neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb." "He staggered not at the promise of God, through unbelief; but, was strong in faith, giving glory to God;" "and, being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform." "Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him;" but, for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;" "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. iv. 12—25.) Thus, "being justified by faith, we shall have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.)

SECTION XXXV.

**The sign of circumcision realized under the gospel and
thenceforward unnecessary.**

When our gracious Lord had fulfilled his ministry by his precepts, suffering, resurrection, and ascension, the promise to Abraham was accomplished ; and the essential principle of true religion, which he exemplified, namely righteousness imputed to "faith, which worketh by love," was revived. "When that which is perfect is come ; then that which is in part," is "done away." (1 Cor. xiii. 10.) Thus, "the law, having been only a shadow of good things to come," vanished, when the substance, which it foreshewed, was realised. Its precepts and ordinances were "holy, and just, and good," but the letter, when applied to the imperfect obedience of man, "killeth." "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse. For it is written, Cursed is every one, that continueth not in *all* things, which are

written in the book of the law, to do them." (Gal. iii. 10.)

It is "the spirit that giveth life." "If then the ministration of death" be "glorious," "how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" "If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." It is indeed a "glory that excelleth." Therefore, "if that, which was done away, was glorious, much more that which remaineth, is glorious." (2 Cor. iii. 6—11.) This "more excellent way," was known unto Abraham not only when he was "in circumcision," but when he was in "uncircumcision:" by which token of circumcision it was ratified, and recorded. The true faith of Abraham was unknown to his descendants under the law; and circumcision, although the token of that faith, was misapplied by them as referring to the covenant of bondage—to Hagar, which is mount Sinai in Arabia—instead of to the promise of Sarai, "the free-woman." The Jews seem almost to have forgotten, that circumcision was a rite instituted four hundred and thirty years *before* their law was delivered. They really seem to have lost sight of the fact, that it was a seal of the covenant to Abraham, and not to Moses—that it bore witness to the *faith* of the former, and not to the *law* of the latter. So strong was this misconception on their minds that we read in the xvth. of Acts of "certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which *believed*,

saying that it was needful to *circumcise* (the Gentile converts) and to command them to keep the *law of Moses*," as if circumcision had been the seal of the law of Moses, and not that of the promise to Abraham. Had they entertained any thing like a just and comprehensive conception of their real privilege, which consisted in their being children of Abraham, as the seed of the promise and not as children under the law of Sinai, they would have perceived that, when the bond is satisfied, the seal is torn off. It may remain, as a matter of indifference, at the pleasure of the party; but its obligation ceases, when the contract is completed. This St. Paul clearly explains to the Galatians (v. 6.) "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith, which worketh by love." He shews (Rom. ii.) their misconception of the true intent and purport of this rite, when these Pharisees asserted its efficacy and necessity, not as a token of the promise to Abraham, but as an essential ceremony incidental to "the law." By considering circumcision and the law as parallel obligations, he shews its utter inefficiency, unless they had been capable of a complete obedience to the latter. "Circumcision verily profiteth *if thou keep the law*; but, if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." The only true and operative circumcision he proves to be "that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not

of men, but of God." Thus the Apostles left the practice of circumcision and the law as observances, which the converted Jews might retain, as matters of form, without offence; but which could have no application whatever to Gentile converts. They represented these ceremonies, even to the Jews themselves, as matters no longer incumbent upon them. This burthen, which they had borne for sixteen hundred years, had now reached its destination. It was removed from their shoulders; and, to retain the yoke, was a needless encumbrance. At all events, they were not to impose it on the Gentile converts. "Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our Fathers nor, we were able to bear." (Acts xv. 10.) The Jews however, even when converted, partly from ignorance of the true and original institution of the rite of circumcision, and partly from a pardonable attachment to the customs of their nation, adhered to the form. Paul so far countenanced this, that he himself circumcised Timotheus, the son of a Jewess by a Greek father, "because of the Jews which were in those quarters." (Acts xvi. 3.)

Nothing can be placed in more direct opposition than the Israelites under the law, as children of bondage; and the seed of Abraham, as children of the promise. Yet the Jews were unaccountably blind to this distinction. They seem to have lost all sight of Abraham in Moses. When Jesus said to

those Jews, who believed on him, "If ye *continue in my word*, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and *the truth shall make you free*," they could not comprehend him. They had lost all conception of their origin in *Sarai*, as the *free-woman*, and thought of nothing but the *bond-woman*, "*Agar*," "which is mount Sinai in Arabia;" and yet they prided themselves in the notion that, as descendants of Abraham *after the flesh*, they had never been in bondage. "We be Abraham's seed; and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou then, ye shall be made free?" Our Lord graciously explained to them, that they who rest on the service of the law, which they cannot perfectly obey, are servants of sin. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." But, "if the son shall *make you free*, ye shall *be free indeed*." They said unto him, "Abraham is our Father," Jesus replied "If ye were *Abraham's children*, ye would *do the works of Abraham*." (John viii. 31—39.)

As if he had said—'Ye are clearly the children of bondage; for if ye were the children of the promise to Abraham, ye would follow him as a pattern, and not adhere to the law of Sinai. Ye would imitate his faith, which worketh by love; and I would cause righteousness to be imputed to you through my atonement, which should make you free indeed.'

The thorough opposition of the Jews, under the law, to the true seed of Abraham under the promise,

is remarkably set forth by the writer, to whom we have before alluded.

The destiny of the Jews, through Abraham, was this most impartial, comprehensive, universal promise —“ In thy seed shall *all the families of the earth be blessed.*”

It was a promise, of the most unlimited extent, to the whole race of mankind.

To this all the prophets in constant succession bear witness. It was a promise repugnant to every idea of partial adoption, or exclusive national selection. But, if we read the description of the Jews given by Gibbon, it would seem as if, so far from being the very people divinely appointed to accomplish this promise, by means of one to be born from their own nation, they had never considered or understood it at all.

All their notions, and expectations, and designs, were in direct opposition and contradiction to the general extension and application of the promise.

In the xvth chapter of the “Decline and Fall,” Mr. Gibbon says—

‘ A single people *refused to join in the common intercourse of mankind.* The sullen obstinacy with which they maintained their peculiar rites and *un-social manners*, seemed to mark them out a distinct species of men, who boldly professed, or who faintly disguised, their implacable hatred to the rest of human kind. The obligation of preaching to the

Gentiles the faith of Moses, had *never been inculcated as a precept of the law* ; nor were the Jews inclined to impose it on themselves as a voluntary duty. The descendants of Abraham were flattered by the opinion, that *they alone* were the heirs of the covenant ; and they were apprehensive of diminishing the value of their inheritance, *by sharing it too easily with the strangers of the earth*. The religion of Moses seems to have been instituted for a *particular country*, as well as for a *single nation*.' (Gibbon, 8vo. ed. xv. 270, &c.)

What an account is this of the children of *Abraham*, in whose seed "all the families of the earth were to be blessed !"

"The Jewish converts" he continues, "obstinately adhered to the ceremonies of their ancestors ; and were little desirous of imposing them on the Gentiles." He refers to their argument that, "had God designed to abolish these sacred rites, the repeal of them would have been no less imperative than their first promulgation. The Mosaic religion would have been represented as a provisional scheme, intended to last only to the coming of the Messiah, who should instruct mankind in a more perfect mode of faith and worship. Christ, moreover, would not himself have attended the synagogues, and observed the law."—Wonderful it is that even these Jewish converts, who could not resist the force of Christ's precepts and the evidence of his miracles, did not perceive, that he,

who had, to use their own words, "instructed mankind in a more perfect mode of faith and worship"—necessarily superseded by so doing, the more imperfect mode.

With these imperfect views, and obstinate prejudices, how utterly must they have disregarded the express fore-warning of their own Moses. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the *midst of thee*, of *thy brethren*, like unto me ; unto Him ye shall hearken. (Deut. xviii. 15.) How little could these Judaizing christians have understood our Lord's meaning, when he said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets ; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (Matt. v. 17.) "Fulfilment" is the *accomplishment* : and that which is accomplished is so far from destroyed, that it is *realised*. But, when the object is completed, the instrument is no longer valid. Having perfected its work, it will necessarily disappear.

The vail of the temple was not rent in twain, until after the great sacrifice was offered up. Therefore, during his ministry, our Lord observed the law, for it was not then "fulfilled." How blinded with prejudice these Jewish converts must have been, not to perceive the anti-type so clearly indicated by the patterns and figures of their own ceremonial observances ! What construction, for instance, could they have put upon the following ? "*The Priests* went always into the *first tabernacle*, accomplishing the

service of God." " But into the *second* went the *High Priest* ALONE, ONCE every year, NOT WITHOUT BLOOD, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." How is it, that they did not perceive, in this most remarkable annual observance, that, which the Holy Ghost really signified by it ? " The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." " But *Christ being come*, an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater, and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands ;" " neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, He entered in *once* into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." " For, if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth, to the purifying of the flesh,"—" how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God." " For this cause, he is the mediator of the New Testament, that, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called, might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, that is the everlasting possession promised to the true seed of Abraham. (Heb. ix. 6—15.)

After they had witnessed this perfect consummation, what further occasion could the Jews, the *con-*

verted Jews especially, see, for their “meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them (only) until the time of *reformation*.” (Ibid 10.) “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold all things are become new.” (2 Cor. v. 17.) But “their minds were blinded. For until this day remaineth the same vail, untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament ; which vail is done away in Christ. For even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.” (2 Cor. iii. 15.)—‘Even in their fallen state,’ says Mr. Gibbon, ‘the Jews shunned, instead of courting the society of strangers.’ In what sense then, could they have understood the promise to their forefathers, that, in them “all the families of the earth should be blessed ?” Their whole system was directly repugnant to the revelation made to Abraham, and to that imputed righteousness through faith, which was his great distinction and reward. They did not perceive that, by becoming christians, they should be adopting the very pattern and example, which their first progenitor had set them.

SECTION XXXVI.

Christianity in harmony with the faith of Abraham ; the system of the Jews repugnant to it.—Illustration from Gibbon.

Let us read even an infidel historian's account of the religion of Jesus, and we shall see, how completely that dispensation harmonised with the religion, the faith, and the promise of Abraham ; as that of the Jews was repugnant to it.

‘ An exclusive zeal for the truth of religion, and the unity of God, was carefully inculcated. Whatever was now revealed to mankind, concerning the nature and designs of the supreme Being, was fitted to increase their reverence. From the beginning of the world, an uninterrupted series of predictions had announced and prepared the long-expected coming of the Messiah. By his expiatory sacrifice, the imperfect sacrifices of the temple were, at once consum-

mated and abolished,' (abolished, because *consummated*.)

' The ceremonial law, which consisted only of types and figures, was succeeded by a pure and spiritual worship, equally adapted to *all climates*, as well as to *every condition of mankind*. The promise of divine favour, instead of being partially confined to the posterity of Abraham, was universally proposed to the free-man and the slave ; to the Greek and to the Barbarian ; to the Jew and to the Gentile. Every privilege, that could raise the proselyte from earth to heaven, that could *exalt his devotion*, and secure his happiness, was reserved for the members of the christian church. *All mankind was permitted, and even solicited, to accept the glorious distinction*. It became the most sacred duty of a new convert to diffuse, among his friends and relations, the inestimable blessing which he had received.' (pp. 276. &c.)

This beautiful system, which dived through the past abyss of two thousand years, and brought up, as it were, to the surface, the long-forgotten faith of Abraham ; this perfect scheme, which the elegant historian evidently so much admires, even while he hurls against it the shafts of his sarcasm—was expounded by a fisherman of Galilee, and by a bigotted Pharisee. That a society of despised Jews should have overturned, should have utterly annihilated, the poetical mythologies of Greece and Rome, with all their attractions of architecture, statuary, literature,

games, festivals, and processions, has been considered a most marvellous achievement. But the wonder is as nothing, when compared with the consideration that the law of Moses was declared by two Jews, and one of them a Pharisee, to be superseded by the primitive faith of Abraham; and, that the expected Messiah had appeared in the person of a carpenter's son, who had been crucified on a charge of blasphemy! Could the utmost ingenuity of Mr. Gibbon have assigned one plausible cause for this? Let him make the most of the growing corruptions incident to human depravity, which so early deformed the pure beauty of the primitive Church. Let him point out exaggerated, or suspicious miraculous pretensions; rude and misguided zeal; increasing ambition; ascetic enthusiasm; and every other alloy which he can cull out of the histories or writings of the presbyters and bishops, during the three first centuries. We would ask, in what way they can affect, (supposing them to merit all the obloquy which he heaps upon them,) the genuine character of Christian precepts and doctrines; and, above all, how they *account for its origin*? The credentials of the Christian religion are in *itself*; in its *foundation*, not in its superstructure; in its own essential properties, not in the qualities or conduct of its teachers. Had the weaknesses of its ministers in Africa, Syria, or Rome, been a thousand times more preposterous, even than he represents them to have

been, they could not, in the slightest degree, have affected the precepts of Jesus Christ; the expositions of Paul and Peter; or the fact that this religion appeared at the time and in the manner that it actually did.

As the evangelical faith of Abraham reappeared, under those great reformers, Paul and Peter; so the vital principle of true religion, of God's real revelation, has been in like manner proof against all the subsequent heresies and schisms with which the depravity of human nature has corrupted the Church of Christ. The misapprehension of the intent of the law by the Jews obscured the anticipated Christianity of Abraham. The abuses of church-government, and the subtleties of inquisitive sophists, and the artful designs of priest-craft, obscured the pure light of Christianity. As the misconceptions of the law were done away, after the lapse of sixteen hundred years, by the Reformers Paul and Peter; so we, who are now living, can bear witness to a second revival of the same faith, after another long lapse of fifteen hundred years. That which Peter and Paul were to the Christianity of Abraham, the same have Wicliffe, Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Ridley, Latimer, and a host of more modern witnesses, been to the same faith. Whatever shades of difference may have sprung up among them, as to some points of doctrines, they preached the Christianity of Abraham, when they preached righteous-

ness freely imputed to "faith, which worketh by love," through the atonement offered by his seed: and, its destined reward—"resurrection from the dead."

The moral effects, which were produced by the revival of Abraham's faith in the Christian Church, of which he was the Father, are well known to all, who have looked into the history of its early days. We will take the description of the same author, whose historical candour has been, in this respect at least, proof against his individual prejudices. He refers to the well-known letter of the younger Pliny to the Emperor Trajan, using, however, this unfair expression—"the Christians assured the Proconsul," instead of—"the Proconsul reported to the Emperor." "The Christians assured the Proconsul, that they were bound by a solemn obligation, to abstain from the commission of those crimes, which disturb the private or public peace of society; from theft, robbery, adultery, perjury, and fraud."

These were the first fruits of Abraham's faith, which worketh by love. He proceeds to say, on the authority of Tertullian, "Near a century afterwards very few Christians had suffered by the hands of the executioner, except on account of their religion. Their serious and sequestered life, averse to the gay luxury of the age, inured them to chastity, temperance, economy, and all the sober and domestic virtues." He gives them credit for "the strictest in-

tegrity;’ and ‘the fairest dealing in their worldly trades and professions.’ He says, that they ‘encountered the contempt of the world with humility, meekness, and patience.’ The more they were persecuted, the more they adhered to each other.’ ‘Even the infidels,’ he says, “remarked their *mutual charity*, and unsuspecting confidence.’ ‘Even their faults and errors were derived from an excess of virtue.’

Such is the testimony which history bears to the moral effects of a revival of the faith of Abraham by those, who lived to see and to adopt it, as realised in the ministry and sacrifice of Christ Jesus our Lord. This testimony is recorded, in the words we have quoted, by one in whose estimation no religion could find favour but that of Pagan mythology and Mahometan sensuality. The historian of the “Decline and Fall, &c.” attempts to disparage the credit of the Mosaic history by contrasting the obstinate bigotry of the later Jews, with the idolatry of those early Israelites, who are said to have *witnessed* the miraculous demonstrations of God Jehovah. ‘The cotemporaries of Moses and Joshua, he says, had beheld, with ‘*the most careless indifference*, the most amazing miracles.’ ‘In contradiction to every known principle of the human mind, that singular people have yielded a more ready assent to the traditions of their more remote ancestors, than to the evidence of their own senses.’ This charge rests on the evi-

dence of the Bible, for there is none other; and how is it borne out by the facts there narrated? How did the Israelites exhibit this 'careless indifference,' when in the presence of God's sensible manifestations of his power and glory? He, who appeals to the testimony of a record, must take it altogether. He cannot select a few passages which may suit his purpose, and discard the rest. Let us then see the description contained in the book of Exodus of this alleged '*careless indifference*' of the Israelites when they "beheld the most amazing miracles."

"All the people saw the thunderings and lightnings and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking;" "and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off, and they said unto Moses, speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exod. xx. 18, 19.) Such was their "careless indifference." So in the chapter, xxiv. "Moses told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and *all the people* answered with one voice, and said, all the words which the Lord hath said will we do." Despairing at the long absence of Moses in the mount; perhaps believing that he must have perished in the blaze of glory, which they thought no man could witness and live; they had formed a symbol after the manner of the Egyptians—they had molten a golden calf, to personate that power which had brought them out of the land of Egypt. "These be thy Gods, O Israel,

which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." (Ex. xxxii. 4.) (See Appendix, note D.) This was, perhaps, an act of idolatrous and symbolical worship, with which they had been imbued during their long sojourn in Egypt. But, possibly, even this may have been no proof of "careless indifference." Strange as it may appear to us in these days, though the Israelites either personated their God by this image, or even adopted for a moment an object of Egyptian worship, they did not the less believe in, and hold in awe, Jehovah's glorious majesty and power, when they "*beheld* his miracles." "When the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle," "when all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle-door, they rose up, and *worshipped* every man at his tent-door. (Ex. xxxiii. 10.)

Was this "careless indifference?"

Was it "careless indifference," which induced them to tender their free-gifts and offerings for the tabernacle, in such profusion, that their liberality was obliged to be restrained. The overseer "spake unto Moses, saying, the people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make." (Ex. xxxvi. 5.)

Symbolical worship is not always a proof that faith is wanting as to a spiritual reality. We know that faith, even spiritual faith, can exist in connection with superstitious symbols, by the practices even of a Christian communion, of which Mr. Gibbon himself

was, at one period of his life, a member. In the church of Rome, we may still see worshippers falling down before a wooden image arrayed in tinsel. This is scarcely less an act of idolatry, than the altar, constructed by Aaron to the golden calf; and his proclamation of a feast to the Lord of burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, under this golden symbol. The imputation of "careless indifference," to these ignorant and wilful Israelites, does not in any way describe the feelings and motives, under which they acted. They were awe-struck, superstitious, prone to the symbolical worship, which they had witnessed in the land of their bondage; but they were the very reverse of careless and indifferent to the power of their God.

It is satisfactory to perceive, how weak are the sneers of infidelity, when it can only attempt to pervert the truth. The sarcasms, even of so learned and able an author as Mr. Gibbon, have no point or force whatever. All his sceptical insinuations, including his favorite objection to "the darkness of the Passion," because it is not recorded by Seneca, or the elder Pliny, when opposed to the divine credentials of Christianity, are like a slender reed hurled against a tower of adamant. The missile may possess its own puny power; but who will say that the tower is not standing, or that such weapons can shake its foundation? What weight has all the flippant ridicule of such writers against this simple

fact:—that Paul, the *Pharisee*, preached the christianity of Abraham—that for the revival of this Faith, the persecutor voluntarily incurred persecution: knowing, “that, in every city, bonds and afflictions abided him”—and that he “counted not his life dear unto himself,” so that he might “testify the gospel of the *grace* of God?” (Acts xx. 23, 24.)

“God hath shewn abundantly, unto the heirs of promise, the *immutability* of his counsel.” (Heb. vi. 17.) Not by any power, or merit, or self-righteousness of his creatures; but, “by his *own* right-hand, and by *his* holy arm, he hath gotten himself the victory,” over sin and death. He hath declared no salvation which man can work out for himself; (for, “it is God that worketh both to will and to do of his good pleasure,” 1 Phil. ii. 13.) nor any righteousness which can establish a claim of debt due from Him to his creatures. But “He hath declared *His* salvation; His righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.” (Ps. xcvi. 1, 2.)

This is the “common salvation;” the Faith *once* delivered unto the Saints.” (Jude 3.) We may trace it from the beginning of the world, to the days in which we now live. It is one revelation,

SECTION XXXVII.

Unity of Divine revelation.

The perfect unity of God's revealed will, is apparent throughout the whole series of the inspired records of Holy Writ. The essential principle, which he has made known to his rational creatures, is this;—namely, that *obedience to his commands is not meritorious*. Simple obedience to a superior and beneficent power, to whom everything is *due*, can possess no positive merit. The utmost which it can hope for, with all humility, is a gracious approval of services wholly due, but imperfectly performed. “Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So, likewise ye, when ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you,—say—We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do.” (Luke xvii. 9, 10.)

But to that faith, which worketh obedience by love

to God, He will, of his own free grace, impute righteousness—and “since it must needs be that offences come” (Matt. xviii. 7.)—he has both provided and accepted an atonement for transgression. The “righteousness” and the “satisfaction,” (both equally provided, and accepted, by Almighty God of his own free grace, through Christ Jesus our Lord, and by his Holy Spirit influencing the hearts of men,) comprise the three essential christian principles of “justification,” “sanctification,” and “redemption.”

We have viewed this one and the same Divine will as perfect in Adam’s state of innocence, and, therefore, requiring then no accomplishment. It was partially exhibited by the elders before the flood, who, in their successive generations, “obtained a good report.”

Abraham was chosen by God, as its great example to the post-diluvian world. It was accomplished by our Lord and Saviour, in whom the whole Divine scheme centres. It was most clearly expounded by St. Paul, to the Christian Church: and, in all the subsequent corruptions of that church, Christ “left not himself without witness.” From Abraham to Christ, and from Christ to the present time, there have been two long periods, of nearly equal duration,—two dark and middle ages, when the revelation of righteousness imputed to “faith, which worketh by love,” has been superseded by the presumptuous claims of meritorious works; claims which

tend to elevate man as the creditor, and to make the Creator his debtor! But, as in the latter of these two periods, the spark of truth was never quite extinguished, till it burst forth at the Reformation; so let us see whether the chain of religious continuity, even when subjected to the rust of legal ordinances by the Israelites and Jews, did not contain some bright links of unimpaired purity.

St. Paul has left us in no doubt upon this point. In his eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, he sets forth "faith," as the actuating principle of the judges of Israel, of David, of Samuel, and of the Prophets. (Heb. xi. 32.) Nor is Moses himself, though the mediator of the law of works, omitted in the catalogue of those holy men, who, "*through faith wrought righteousness.*" (verse 33.) The covenant of moral and ceremonial works, conditioned on the terms of temporal prosperity for their performance, or temporal adversity for their non-performance, was ordained by angels in his hands as a mediator. The Israelites must perform their part of this covenant completely, or they forfeited its privileges, and incurred its penalties. Thus it was a law of bondage. But this law, so covenanted, was the will of God. Its performance, therefore, might be founded on other motives than the mere temporal advantages, with which it was conditioned. An obedience to the law might proceed from simple devotion to the great Being, who caused it to be

ordained. The Jews, generally, seem to have had little conception of their obligations under the law in the latter sense. But it will be a subject of great interest to inquire, whether Moses himself did not contemplate a primary and spiritual obligation to God through *faith*, under that very law, of which he was the mediator in its secondary character, as a covenant of *works*.

Faith was the essential characteristic of Moses personally. By virtue of that principle he was called to, and undertook, the prodigious task, which God determined to accomplish by his means. His natural qualities would have made him shrink from the weighty responsibility of so vast an undertaking, as attempt to rescue his nation from the bondage of Egypt. "O my Lord"—said he, "I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue:" "Who am I—that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

God said "I will be with thee." (Exod. iii. 12.) That was sufficient—"O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send."

"Faith," that is, devotion to God, was with him a powerful influence, though worldly ambition and temporal prosperity had no influence in his mind—for,

"By faith he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter."

It was a higher principle with him than the allurements of pleasure—for,

“ By faith, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”

It was a stronger motive than the temptation of riches—for,

“ He esteemed the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.”

Moses knew how to estimate the *reproach of Christ!* Those gracious words had not then been uttered,—
“ Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake ;—Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.” Yet Moses had this faith ! He knew how to value “ the pearl of great price ;” and to consider as nothing the favor or the fury of princes, when opposed to the true religion of Almighty God.

The Passover was observed, and the passage of the Red-sea was effected by him, *in faith*, for,

“ He endured as *seeing* Him who is *invisible*.”

But did Moses, afterwards, as the mediator of a covenant of works conditioned on temporal blessings of prosperity, lose sight of this vital principle of “ faith,” as the great motive to obedience ? Or did he not rather view, with prophetic eye, the distant period, when his own people should finally set aside that “ stumbling-stone” at which they stumbled ;

and attain to the true law of righteousness, even the righteousness which is of *faith* ?

Faith is a principle of *the heart*. And it was this principle, to which Moses emphatically appealed, when he delivered the second covenant in Moab, at the close of his ministry. "The Lord commanded Moses to make a covenant with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, *beside the covenant, which he made with them in Horeb.*" (Deut. xxix. 1.)

In this second covenant it is declared, "Neither with *you only* do I make this covenant and this oath ; but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God ; and *also with him, that is not here with us* this day."—There appears to have been a hidden meaning, to be revealed in distant times, conveyed in this announcement. "Those things, which *are* revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever." But, "the secret things belong unto the Lord our God." (Deut. xxix. 29.)

We may perhaps, in these days, understand what those events, then kept secret from the Israelites, were intended to be. The true meaning of the following words of Moses, which his people did not fully understand, may be clear and intelligible to us.—"When thou" (the nation of Israel) "shalt call all these things to mind, *among all the nations* whither *the Lord thy God hath driven thee* ; and shalt return unto the Lord thy God ; and shalt obey his voice . . —with *all thine heart and with all thy soul* : then

the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from *all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.*"

"If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee unto the land, which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it: and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." (Deut. xxx.) So St. Peter (Acts ii. 39.) "The promise is unto you and to your children, and to *all that are afar off*, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The expression of Moses, "he will multiply *thee above thy Fathers*," is similar to the blessing bestowed by Jacob on Joseph the heir of the birth-right, on which we have commented elsewhere. "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of *my progenitors*, unto the *utmost bound of the everlasting hills.*" It is the blessing on all the seed of promise, Jew and Gentile. But, in proclaiming this promise to his people at Horeb, did Moses confer it on those, who had the seal of circumcision after the flesh? No—he extends it to that circumcision which *is of the heart*, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. ii. 29.) "The Lord thy God," he says, "*will circumcise thine heart*, and *the heart* of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with

all *thy heart*, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. xxx. 6.) It is the very doctrine of St. Paul; and we have thus, in this covenant at Moab, an epitome as it were of the fundamental gospel principle.

Circumcision is the seal of Abraham's covenant, the covenant of *faith*, which worketh obedience by love, and to which God will of his grace impute righteousness. We have this great truth announced even by Moses, the mediator of the covenant of works—the covenant of bondage. It is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; and this great truth we receive on the joint authority of Moses and St. Paul!

May God in his own good time, as he hath "gathered others to him," so also again "gather the outcasts of Israel" to that faith, which was the faith of their "elders," the faith of Abraham, of Moses, of the Judges, of David, of Samuel, and of the prophets—that faith, which Paul revived, and which Luther restored.

God has vouchsafed to man one revelation of his will, throughout all generations, by which alone we can "come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . . unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. iv. 13.)

SECTION XXXVIII.

Evidence of gospel truth by "subsequent confirmation."
Saul the persecutor.

Let us now pause: and let us contemplate the wondrous scheme, which the sacred records comprise; and which they have developed, by gradual and progressive revelation, from the beginning of the world, for our instruction, and for the confirmation of our faith. We use the term '*scheme*' in the sense of our standard Lexicographer's definition, namely, as 'a combination of various things into *one* view, design, or purpose.' (Dr. Johnson.)

If we reflect upon this '*scheme*':—if we proceed, link by link, through that prophetic chain, which conducts and introduces us to the gospel consummation, leading us from the creation of the world to the first advent of Christ;—can we fail to perceive;—shall we hesitate to acknowledge its clear, simple, and unquestionable connection? If we carefully unfold that chain, and distribute its several successive

links in their regular order, each in connection with the one before it ; or each in connection with that which follows it ; will it not lead us, by infallible progression, to the gospel-consummation ? If that be not the end—the ‘ goal ’—the point, from which we must start ; or at which we must arrive—what is ? Without that directing mark, would not this chain be so tangled, involved, and inextricable, as to be utterly incapable of being unravelled ? But, when carefully traced to that final point, is it not distinct, regular, and harmonious, throughout the whole extent of its continuity ?

But, does this ‘ scheme,’ which we have been considering,—this ‘ combination of various things into one view ’—does it bear the marks of a preconceived design of any one man,—or number of men,—or confederate succession of men ? Men have recorded its details ; men have explained its doctrines ; but whose *conception* is discovered in the expansion and the unity of this marvellous scheme ?

The four gospels proclaim historically, that *consummation*, to which all the previous writings in Holy Scripture are introductory. The gospels are a record. But they do not constitute, by themselves, the sole credentials of those events, which they record.

No single history, perhaps, can claim entire credence, on its own unsupported testimony. But, four cotemporary writers, each concurring in the main and essential facts, to which the others have

deposed, and relating events, which are said to have occurred under the observation of them all, must be, either credible witnesses, or known to have been fraudulent conspirators by those who lived in their own times. It must be some very unusual, as well as most iniquitous collusion, which could nullify that just and fair principle of evidence ;—" in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." (Matt. xviii. 16.) But the evangelical records have commanded attention, not only at the time when they were written ; and by the people to whom they were primarily addressed ; but, during a continued period of nearly nineteen hundred years ;—and in various and remote countries, even until the language, in which they were expressed, has become no longer vernacular in any part of the world.

Although, therefore, the gospels may have been fairly entitled to claim undoubting credit, at the time when they were first promulgated ; although their concurrence must, also, give them a powerful title to belief at any period, however distant ; still, in these remote times, it may be reasonable, to require some extrinsic credentials, to prove their genuineness and authority.

With respect to secular histories, we well know, that they are frequently, on many points, fallacious.

They are received rather as an approximation to realities, than as an exactly correct account of them,

in all particulars. We confide in them, more or less, as their accounts are capable of corroboration from other, and independent, sources. When they relate events, which have occurred in our own times, we judge of their relation by our own knowledge or experience; or by the knowledge and experience of other cotemporary witnesses. When they refer to events beyond an existing generation, we consult some proximate tradition; and when they narrate affairs which have long since past, we examine the nearest cotemporary records of the events in question.

An historian is always anxious to exhibit his authorities. The four evangelists were men—men “of like passions with ourselves.” (Acts xiv. 15.) There is no privilege (except that of Divine inspiration, in which if we believe, we must of course believe them, and thus concede the whole question)—there is no ordinary privilege, attaching to the names of ‘Matthew,’ ‘Mark,’ ‘Luke,’ and ‘John,’ which exempts them from the common tests of historiographers. Let us, then, apply to them these ordinary tests. The date, assigned to the publication of three out of the four gospels, is about the sixtieth year of the present æra.

Writing, with a view to publication, was not probably, a very common occupation in those days; and the four received accounts of the history of Christ are the only alleged cotemporary histories of his life and passion, in favour of which any claim to authen-

ticity has been *maintained*. We cannot, therefore, look for any direct concurring testimony of writers, who lived at the same time. The next degree of confirmation would be a recognition of the accounts which we have received, by those, who were the nearest cotemporaries of the alleged authors. Of this kind of testimony, we have ample and convincing remains; considering the vast interval of time between that period and the present day. The most remote is the epistle ascribed to Barnabas, the companion of Paul, quoted by Clement of Alexandria, A.D. 194, by Oregin, A.D. 230—by Eusebius, and by Jerome. This epistle quotes St. Matthew's words, "many are called, but few are chosen." (xx. 16; xxii. 14.) "Give to every one that asketh thee," (v. 42.)—and "not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance," (ix. 13.) The reader, who consults the *Evidences of Paley*, and his authority, 'Lardner,' will be quite satisfied, that we have the means of tracing the reputation of the gospel-writers, as of divine authority, from an early date after their publication, down to our own times. We should refuse credit to no secular historian on similar confirmation. This reputation was certainly not established by any fraudulent collusion. The earliest notices and quotations from the several histories in question, which are found in subsequent writers, are sufficient to prove the identity of these extracts with portions of the gospels; but they are not, by any means, suffi-

ently copious, or methodical, or direct, to indicate any design or plan concurred in, for the purpose of establishing a system. The quotation by Barnabas from Matthew, noticed by Clement, and similar passages in other ancient writings, are merely incidentally introduced ; and they are, for that very reason, the most unquestionable proof, that the writings ascribed to the four evangelists existed, and were received and appealed to as of authority, at the period assigned for their origin. (See Appendix, Note E.) Thus, the gospels are not only a standard of faith to the Christian churches of the present day ; but it can be shewn, that they have maintained the same character without interruption, almost from the date of their first publication. They are not a collection of writings, recounting miraculous events, of which no one really knows the origin, or how they came to be accepted as the ground of a religious system. They are not a mystic volume in the hands of a priestly order, imposed, at the dictation of that order alone, upon the credulity of their votaries. We can trace them to their source ; consequently, we can shew them to be *genuine* ; and, if so, we have proof of their *authenticity* by the *antecedent* testimony of more ancient scriptures ; and by the *subsequent* testimony of those, who were martyrs, through suffering and even death, to the accounts which they relate.

The gospels are not, like the Koran of Mahomet, a

record of the *personal* pretensions of the authors whose names they bear. The object for which they were written, is extrinsic to any *individual interest* of the authors, except on the supposition that the whole account which they give *is true*. The writers have narrated super-human works, mysterious doctrines, pure and beautiful moral precepts, all of which are ascribed, not to themselves, but to *another person*. The accounts which they have published, involve no pretensions to, nor any the slightest prospect of power, or gain, or advantage on their own behalf, unless their accounts be *absolutely true*. If their accounts were not true, then not only was "their preaching vain," but so far as regards this life, they were "of all men most miserable."

There are, perhaps, no written records in the world, which are furnished with external and internal proofs of their authenticity so abundantly as the gospels. They are moreover, 'sui generis.' There is nothing of a similar style, of a similar nature, or written with a similar object, (*except in connection with their own object*) to be found in any other publication since time began.

The main and essential *facts*, which the gospel histories record, (together with the miraculous and doctrinal antecedents to these facts) constitute a *consummation*. What are the elements of that consummation? They are as follows:—namely, that Jesus (the reputed son of Joseph, a Jewish carpenter

of the house and lineage of David, but born nevertheless of a *Virgin Mother*,) suffered a penal death ; and that he rose from his grave, and conversed again with his disciples in his human form, and finally ascended in their sight into Heaven. To this consummation of facts is further added the following wonderful explanation, namely, that he, who was thus born of a virgin mother, in the line of David, proceeded from God, and was God ! Lastly the doctrinal corollary appended to these facts, and to this explanation, is, that the death of this Divine personage was a vicarious atonement for the sins of all mankind ; and that it conferred on them the free gift of a similar resurrection from the dead, and eternal life, on the conditions of repentance for past sins, and an obedience to the laws of God, through faith in, and love towards, him. Finally, that baptism was appointed as a token of this gracious covenant.

This is the *consummation* set forth in the four historical accounts of the gospel.

But a “consummation,” supposes a *previously existing* and *progressing* design, or plan, or scheme, or intention.

Now this previously existing plan or design, is not methodically and distinctly laid down as a preliminary, or by way of preface, in these four accounts either separately or jointly. They rather plunge, as it were at once, ‘in medias res.’ If we would acquire a comprehensive knowledge of all the particulars,

which the gospel consummation has perfected, we must collect and pick them out, as it were, not from these four writings alone, but from a view of the facts and circumstances therein recorded, taken in connection with other writings, which *preceded* and which *followed* them. It will be found, that the gospel consummation is the result of a grand and comprehensive scheme, (the particulars of which are comprised in records, which have been handed down from the creation of the world) rather than the enunciation of a plan, which the gospel accounts *originated*, as well as perfected.

Now these wonderful events, of which we have given the briefest summary, constitute the consummation of that Divine dispensation, by which it has pleased Almighty God, to accept the repentance of, and to confer eternal salvation on, man, by means of His own omnipotent attributes, and by His own free grace and gift. But to the authenticity of those records, in which this Divine consummation is proclaimed, there are testimonies of two kinds; the one by *anticipation*, by introductory and gradual development; the other by subsequent recognition and confirmation, exhibited in a series of doctrinal explanations and expositions.

It has been the object of the preceding pages, to set forth, however imperfectly, a very limited portion of the testimony by *anticipation*. We say a very limited portion; for, if it were attempted to arrange

all the direct prophecies ; and all the incidental types, by figures, or by typical circumstances and events, which may be collected throughout the whole body of "the Law," and "the Psalms," and "the Prophets ;" and to mark their fulfilment, and parallelism, as exhibited in the New Testament ; with an attempt at illustration by comments of our own—if we were to attempt such a task, we might almost adopt the pleonasm of St. John, and say, "If they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." But we cannot too strongly recommend this wonderful, this most interesting and convincing study to all, who are desirous to obey the injunction of St. Peter ; and to be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in them," (1 Pet. ii. 15.) Since the days of a Bede, a Wicliffe, a Coverdale, a Tyndal, a Matthew, a Cranmer ; since the pages of God's word were first opened to all eyes (that were not wilfully shut) under the auspices of a Henry, an Edward, an Elizabeth, and a James ; what expansion ! what amplification ! what aids to the unlearned ! have been graciously permitted to accompany the promulgation of that blessed word ! How invaluable are the marginal references ! the incredible labours of a Cruden ! and the commentaries of that host of learned divines, who (though not through sufferings and death,) may be truly called a "noble army of *Martyrs*," as witnesses to the truth !

If there is any volume in the world, which requires, and which will amply repay the labour of study, and of investigation, and of collation, it is the Holy Bible :—the “*Old*,” in connexion with the “*New*” “*testaments*” of God—the entire *witness* of the Creator’s final “*Will*” towards his creatures. These studies will be like a microscopic lens, magnifying every minute particle of light, and rendering each plain, and distinct, in all its parts, to the mental vision. They will collect all the scattered rays of revelation, which are diffused through the universe of time ; and trace them to the great centre of their dispersion ; to Him, that is “the Light of the world :” (John viii. 12,) to Him, who came “a *Light* into the world,” that, “whosoever believeth on Him should not abide in darkness.” (John xii. 46.)

But, as there is a testimony to gospel truth by “anticipation,” so is there also a testimony by “subsequent confirmation.” Here, again, the field is too expansive for our limits, and our powers. But we will select only one topic.

The evangelists record the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The same marvellous event, and also the ascension, are noticed in the book called the Acts of the Apostles.

The small society of Christ’s disciples, which was constituted after these events, found it necessary to appoint particular officers for the daily ministration of subsistence among the widows of certain Greek

and Hebrew converts. Among those who were selected for this purpose, was Stephen, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." Soon after, a motley assemblage of disputants, belonging to the synagogue of the Libertines, with other Jews from Cyrene, Alexandria, and Asia Minor, charged this man with sedition against the temple and the law. In his defence, he enlarged on that perverse character, which had at all times distinguished their nation—namely a disposition to reject the Mediator, whom God had graciously appointed, between His Divine Majesty and their nation. He shewed, that this had been the conduct of their fathers even towards Moses; and that it had been, in like manner, their conduct towards Jesus Christ. "Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears" said he—"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost"—"*As your fathers did—so do ye.*" Circumcision was a token of the covenant of promise by God to Abraham, and to all the world. They perpetuated the form; but they rejected the spirit and intent of that ordinance. They were uncircumcised in heart and ears, because they adhered to Hagar, the bondage of the law; but despised the promise through Sarai the free-woman; and were then rejecting that liberty through grace, by which Christ would have made them free.

So also, he tells them, their fathers of old would not obey their divinely-appointed leader Moses, when the angel spake to him on mount Sinai, but thrust

him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt !

Thus did their forefathers, the Israelites, disregard their deliverance, and cling to the land of their bondage ; as, in like manner, the Jews of Stephen's day rejected their deliverance through Christ ; and clung to the bondage of the Law. " As your fathers did, so do ye."

Cut to the heart by these reproaches of Stephen, the people " gnashed on him with their teeth : "—when this disciple of the crucified Jesus gave the following testimony to His resurrection and ascension. " Behold !—I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God ! " " Then they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge ! And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Thus did Stephen seal his testimony to the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, with his blood ! What were his last words in the agony of a violent death ? " Lord, lay not this sin to their charge ! " He was " full of the Holy Ghost " and uttered these words in the true spirit of His Lord, who, when hanging on the Cross, at that moment of excruciating torture, exclaimed,—“ Father ! forgive them ;—for they know not what they do ! ”

Well may it be said, in the account transmitted to

us, of these "*acts of the apostles*,"—"With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." (Acts iv. 33.) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—As Christ himself gave this testimony of his love to mankind, so Stephen gave his testimony to "the truth which is in Jesus."

"Though scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man one would even dare to die." (Rom. v. 7.) So did Stephen: and, if this crucified Jesus, for whom Stephen dared to die, was so righteous, and so good, that his disciple readily submitted to that penalty in testimony of his truth;—then, we have at once the answer to Pilate's question, "What is Truth?" (John xviii. 38.) That answer is *self-evident* from the martyrdom of Stephen. It is this—THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST IS TRUTH.

But, our present concern is not with those, who bore testimony to the truth, as the immediate cotemporary witnesses, among whom, Stephen, as one of the earliest disciples, may be classed. We propose to produce testimony of another kind—viz. testimony by *subsequent confirmation*. We have adverted to the martyrdom of Stephen, less on its own account, than as it introduces us to another witness. The history tells us, that, among the turbulent assemblage, who suborned false witnesses to accuse the deacon Stephen of having spoken blasphemous words

against Moses and against God, there were "certain of the synagogue which is called the synagogue of the Libertines," and men from "*Cilicia*," and "*Asia*."

It seems that the synagogue of the Libertines was a congregation of Jews at Jerusalem, whose parents had been slaves to the Romans; but who obtained their freedom; and thus the children of these parents were 'free-born.' The account is this.— "Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called libertines, . . . and of them of Cilicia, and of Asia, disputing with Stephen." Among them was a young man, whose name was Saul; and, when Stephen was stoned, the false and suborned witnesses, who seem to have been also the executioners, laid down their clothes at the feet of this young man, who "was consenting unto Stephen's death."

We class this young man as, probably, a member of the synagogue of the libertines: and certainly as a native of the province of Cilicia, in Asia Minor—on the best authority; namely, the account which he has given of himself.

On a subsequent occasion, when he himself was an *object of accusation* for defending the very cause, which he at first opposed, he solicited a private conference with the chief Captain of the Roman guard; and, addressing him in the Greek language, said, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city of *Cilicia*, a citizen of no mean city." And, afterwards,

when about to be ignominiously scourged, as a mere despised Jew, subject to the oppression of Roman power, he appealed to his privileges as a free subject of the empire ; pleading that it was “ unlawful to scourge such an one uncondemned.” The chief Captain said unto him, “ Tell me—art thou a Roman ?” He said, Yea. And the chief Captain answered—“ With a great sum obtained I this freedom—And Paul said, But I was *free-born*.” His father was an emancipated Jew, (Tacitus speaks of 4000 such who were “ banished to Sardinia ”) and thus Paul inherited the right of a free subject.

The appointment of Stephen to be a deacon arose from a murmuring of the Grecians, (the Jewish as well as the native converts, who inhabited the Roman provinces in Asia Minor, and elsewhere) against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. This dispute occurred in those days, which refers to the imprisonment of the apostles by the High-priest and the Sadducees ; from which they were released by the angel of the Lord ; and, being found preaching in the temple, were apprehended, and brought before the council. Here they testified openly the great fact, which Stephen confirmed by his death. “ The God of our fathers,” said they, “ raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins.” So

Stephen—"I see the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

The council of the High-priest, before whom the apostles were brought, was of the sect of the Sadducees. (Acts v. 17.) But there was one of the council a Pharisee, named Gamaliel. This man "was a doctor of the law, and had in reputation among all the people." The abstract notion of a resurrection from the dead was not so abhorrent to his ideas, as a Pharisee, as it was to those of the Sadducees. He, therefore, behaved towards the apostles with more candour and toleration, than the other members of the council were disposed to do. "Refrain," said he, "from these men," and let them alone; "for, if this counsel or this work be of man, it will come to nought; but, if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God!"—(Was it the work of man? Has it come to nought?)

It is, perhaps, probable that the doctor of the Pharisee sect, whose moderation and candour was so strikingly contrasted with the cruel bigotry and prejudice of the Sadducee members of the council, was governor of the libertine synagogue. The fair and liberal tenor of his proposition accords with the spirit, which would naturally be found in one, who presided over those Jews, whose minds were expanded by a residence amongst, and an intercourse with, the more polished nations under the Roman rule; and

who had been admitted to the civil privileges of that people. It is certain, that he was the preceptor of the young man Saul the Cilician. He had instructed his pupil, "according to the perfect manner of the law of the Fathers," but he had not imbued him with his own spirit of toleration. So far from it, that Saul had been present at, and consenting to, the cruel and violent death of Stephen. Though, as a Pharisee, he "believed that the rewards and punishments of the law extended both to the soul and body ; and that their duration was prolonged beyond this transitory life ;" (Mosheim, Pt. I. viii.) yet, he could not bear with patience that the "Son of man"—whom his nation and sect had crucified as a malefactor—was then, as Stephen proclaimed, "standing on the right hand of God." He consented unto the martyr's death, and the sanguinary violence of his murderers. Nor was he content with this ;—he "made havoc of the church, entering into every house ; and, haling men and women, committed them to prison." He "breathed out threatenings and slaughter," against the disciples of the Lord ; and "desired of the High-priest, letters to Damascus to the synagogue, that, if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem." He "shut up many saints in prison ; and, when they were put to death, he gave his voice against them. He punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled

them to blaspheme ; and, being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them even unto strange cities." It was with this object, that he solicited, and obtained, authority and commission from the chief priests to Damascus.

Now, we have proposed to produce testimony *subsequent* to any statement recorded in the *four gospels*, in confirmation of the account therein contained, that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. If those points are proved, Christianity is proved ;—and there is an end of scepticism and infidelity : because, no objection, no argument, can countervail a *fact*, which is proved beyond all rational doubt.

We say, that no objections, no arguments, no pretended inconsistencies, or incongruities, or difficulties, or cavils, as to particulars, can *countervail* (that is, have equal weight and value by contradiction) when opposed to the assertion of a *fact*, undeniably *proved*.

We shall call our subsequent witness to the ascension and resurrection of Christ, perhaps, from out of that very Synagogue of the Libertines ; or, at least, from the assembly of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and them of Cilicia and Asia, who disputed with Stephen, and compassed his death.

We shall call a man, with respect to whose existence, and identity, and general history, the most perverse sceptic cannot raise a doubt. Even that

arch-infidel (Thomas Paine) is 'unable to produce any argument to render questionable either the genuineness, or authenticity,' of the witness whom we shall call.—(Bp. Watson's Apology.)

We have been considering a narrative of the acts of our witness. But he has written a series of letters to public bodies at Rome, at Corinth, at Philippi, and to provinces and cities in Asia Minor. The '*undesign'd conformity* of these letters with the narrative, prove to demonstration, the genuineness of both.'—(See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*.) It is absurd, even to suppose a doubt on those matters.

The witness we call, then, is the young man, Saul of Tarsus, in Cilicia; free-born in the Roman Empire; a pupil of Gamaliel; circumcised the eighth day; of the stock of Israel; of the tribe of Benjamin; an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the Law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, "*persecuting the Church*;" (Phil. iii. 5.) "A blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious." (1 Tim. i. 13.) This is the man, to whose evidence we appeal, as 'subsequent confirmation' of the gospel account of the resurrection and ascension of Christ.

Now, let us consider, and weigh the value of such testimony as this. If a man has opposed the assertion by others of a fact, a belief in which he considers to be dangerous to the religious and civil laws and institutions of his country; if he opposes the assertion of that fact with the utmost zeal in his

power, even to the extent of cruelty and persecution ; and, if we find him, at an after period, *asserting that very same fact* with still greater zeal ; and willing to suffer any pains and penalties, even to imprisonment and death, in its support ; we know, that he must have been brought, by some means, to an unfeigned *belief of the fact in question.*

But there must have been a cause for this change. If he should explain to us what that cause was, we should believe his statement, because we witness its effect.

Lastly, if the cause, which he assigns, and which we cannot but believe from its effects, be of such a nature as must have convinced us, as it did him ; then we must, ourselves, believe the fact. It is morally impossible that we could discredit it.

If the Reformer Zuinglius, who was ready to suffer at the stake in opposition to the doctrine of transubstantiation, had latterly proclaimed that doctrine with equal zeal and perseverance ; alleging, that it had been revealed to him by a divine vision ; and had he maintained it, in defiance of sufferings, persecutions, and martyrdom ; we should give him credit for his conversion ; nor is it possible, that we could disbelieve, that he had experienced the vision, if, in all respects, his sanity, his self-possession, his acuteness of mind, his consistency, and every indication of sound mental qualities were unquestionable.

We should be persuaded that the cause of his

conversion was that, which he declared it to have been;—namely, a divine revelation; and the same vision, which had convinced him, would, on his testimony, also have convinced us. We should believe that transubstantiation had been revealed to him by a direct manifestation of God, and therefore we ourselves could not but believe in transubstantiation.

Now this is the nature of the testimony, which is afforded by the “young man whose name was Saul,” to the resurrection and ascension of Christ. We have seen how he persecuted those, who asserted these facts. Let us now view him asserting them himself. Always bearing in mind who and what he had been—as touching the Law, a bigoted Pharisee!

SECTION XXXIX.

**Evidence of gospel truth by subsequent confirmation.—
Paul the apostle.—Conclusion.**

WITHIN two years after the persecution of Stephen, we find this pupil of Gamaliel at Damascus, in Syria ; to which place he had solicited a commission, to apprehend all the new disciples of the Christian faith ; and to bring them bound unto Jerusalem. But with whom do we find him associated in that city ?—with those very disciples ! And “ straightway *he* (this *Pharisee*, and persecutor of the Christians,) *preached Christ in the synagogue*—that he is the Son of God ! ” What had produced this change ? a change so sudden, so wonderful, so complete !

“ All that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem ; and came hither with that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief Priests ? ” (Acts ix. 21.) Amazed indeed they

might well have been ! “ But Saul increased more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.”

The first fruit of this astonishing conversion, was the imminent risk of a violent death, from which the convert escaped. He repaired to Jerusalem, where “ he essayed to join himself to the disciples ; but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.” On the assurance of Barnabas, however, that this late persecutor had “ preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus,” he was admitted to the fraternity, and was “ with them going out and coming in at Jerusalem.”

His exhortations were addressed chiefly to the Grecians, to whom “ he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus.” His life, however, was again in danger ; and he escaped first to Cesarea, on the coast of Samaria ; and thence to his own city Tarsus in Cilicia. From thence, he was brought by Barnabas to Antioch, a city at the northern extremity of Syria, on the river Thapsacus. There many were converted ; “ and the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” From thence, he accompanied Barnabas with contributions for the brethren which dwelt in Judea, in anticipation of a “ great dearth,” which had been foretold by a certain prophet named Agabus, who came to Jerusalem from Antioch, and signified by the Spirit this impending calamity, “ which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.”

Having accomplished that mission, Saul returned again to Antioch, from whence he proceeded with Barnabas by Seleucia to Cyprus, visiting Salamis, and then Paphos, cities of that island. At the latter place, Saul was also called "Paul;" and there he preached to Sergius Paulus, the deputy of the country. From Paphos they sailed to Perga, on the coast of Pamphylia; and they went thence to Antioch, a city of Pisidia in Asia Minor.

This was about the tenth year of his novitiate.

We have tracked the convert, from his first appearance in that character at Damascus, to Pisidia. Here he and Barnabas appeared in the synagogue of those who were of their own nation, on the sabbath-day, and sat down. After "the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."

Paul immediately unveiled to their sight, the concentration of prophetic light in Christ Jesus, its focal point.—"Of this man's (David's) seed," said he, "hath God, *according to his promise*" (the promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,) "raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus!" He shewed how, "they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, *because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets*, which are read every Sabbath-day, have *fulfilled them in condemning Him*. And when they had fulfilled

all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre."

The crucifixion of Christ was the fulfilment of prophecy. It was an event fore-ordained in the inscrutable counsels of the Most High. The hearts of the Jews were hardened, as the heart of Pharaoh had been hardened, for this cause—namely, "that God might shew his power in them; and that his name might be declared in *all the earth*." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Rom. ix. 17.) But this necessity, (if we may use the expression) if it applied to "them that dwell in Jerusalem," did not apply to those Jews, who were scattered abroad throughout the Gentile lands! nor even to those of Jerusalem itself, *after* the crucifixion. Therefore it was, that the Jews had the privilege of priority over the Gentiles, in having the gospel preached to them: (a priority consistent with their spiritual election, as the elder brethren of the church of God.)

At Phenice, at Cyprus, at Antioch, "they that were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, preached the word to *none but unto the Jews only*." (Acts xi. 19.) That they, who dwelt at Jerusalem, had crucified the Lord of glory, was no reason why even *they*, (as well as those "throughout all the coasts of Judæa,") should not "repent and turn to God." (Acts xxvi. 20.)

Paul and Barnabas, on this very occasion at Antioch

in Pisidia, warned the Jews, (when, filled with envy, they spoke against those things which were spoken, contradicting and blaspheming,) "It was necessary that the word of God should *first* have been spoken unto you: but seeing ye put it from you, lo! we turn to the Gentiles."

The Jews had condemned and executed their Messiah; precisely as Paul himself had persecuted the infant church: they had acted "in ignorance and unbelief."

A plenary pardon was simultaneously prepared for them, at the very instant that their predestinated guilt had been accomplished. The last words of their blessed victim were, "Father! *forgive* them; for they *know not what they do*." If, in a spirit of presumptuous remonstrance, any one should be disposed to ask, how could guilt attach to an act of his creatures, which the Almighty Creator himself had decreed? "Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" the answer to such a cavil is most convincing, most consoling, most gracious. It is this, that God, in the second person of his glorious Trinity in Unity, himself "endured, with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," because he was "willing to shew his wrath" against sin "and to make his power known to all the world." But to what end did He vouchsafe to endure, with much long-suffering, these vessels of wrath, who were alas! so justly fitted to destruction? Was it that

they might indeed be *irredeemably* destroyed? Far from it; it was not that he might accomplish destruction on those *vessels of wrath* who were fitted to it; but that he might make known the riches of his glory on the *vessels of mercy*, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us whom he hath called," (fully, freely, and impartially) "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." (Rom. ix. 19, 24.) Thus the Saviour's last prayer was offered up in behalf, even of these vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

If the Jews as a nation have committed an *unpardonable* crime, that crime is not the crucifixion; but a persevering obstinacy in unbelief. But, such is the mercy of God, that for Israel there is even yet a 'locus penitentiae.' It is not with the seed of Jacob, as it was with Esau, "who, when he would have inherited the blessing, was rejected; who found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." The gentle and free grace of Christ has none of the stern terrors of the law. They who will approach him, "are not come unto the mount that burned with fire:—nor unto blackness and darkness and tempest: . . . but they are come unto mount Sion" (unto the city of promise); "unto the city of the living God; and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God the judge of all; and to the spirits of just

men made perfect; and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling." (Heb. xii.)

God hath not irrecoverably "cast away his people which he foreknew." If "they abide not in unbelief, they shall be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again;" "and so all Israel shall be saved." (Rom. xi.) "So we see, that they could not enter in," (not because they had condemned and killed the just, but) "*because of unbelief.*" (Heb. iii. 19.)

The crucifixion was ordained by God, but not a perseverance in unbelief.

The angels reminded the women of Galilee of our Saviour's saying "that the Son of man *must* be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." Therefore the chief Priests and the rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

Our Lord when he walked with the disciples, who accompanied him to Emmaus, shewed them that, in the accomplishment of their own prophecies, this event was necessary. "OUGHT not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

He rebukes them for not comprehending the purport of their own inspired scriptures. "O fools! and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Then, "beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he" himself, graciously "expounded to them *in all the scriptures*, the things concerning

himself;" Afterwards, when our Lord appeared to his disciples at Jerusalem, he opened their understandings, that they might *understand the scriptures*; and comprehend that all things must be fulfilled, which were "written in the law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning him." "Thus," said he "it is written: and thus it *behoved* Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day;" "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem.*"

The glad tidings of *repentance*, and *remission of sins*, were to *begin at Jerusalem*; at the very place where Christ was sacrificed. It was open to the Priests, the scribes, the rulers, and the people, who had condemned the innocent blood, to repent that they had not known him; nor yet the voices of the prophets, which were read every sabbath day; and now at length to perceive that, "in condemning him," "they had fulfilled them."

The great consummation must have been achieved. Christ himself, when his soul was troubled at the prospect of his sufferings, would not say—"Father! save me from this hour," but "*For this cause* came I unto this hour." "Therefore, they could not believe; because that Esaias had said, Lord! who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" and again, "He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they

should not see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

Before the crucifixion, the number of the disciples, "to whom it was the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom," constituted merely "a little flock." For though "among the chief rulers, also, many believed on him;" (being unable to resist the evidence of his miracles and doctrines) yet, "because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him. For they loved the praise of men, more than the praise of God." (John xii. 43.)

The faith even of Christ's chosen disciples was very imperfect, so long as he remained with them, *before his crucifixion*. When Jesus began to shew his disciples, how he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief Priests and Scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day, Peter began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." How little could he then have comprehended the law and the Prophets, which he so fully expounded after his Lord and Master's ascension! He denied him in his last extremity! Again, Thomas said unto him. "Lord, *we know not whither thou goest*; and how can we know the way?" Philip also said unto him, "Lord! shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"



At the mount of Olives, our Lord fore-warned them—"All ye shall be offended because of me this night."

These words were speedily verified: for when he was apprehended, "all the disciples forsook him, and fled." As yet the season was, as it were, "afore harvest, when the grape is ripening in the flower." Is. xviii. 5.)

It was not until the *consummation*; it was not until our Saviour bowed his head and gave up the ghost, that he said "IT IS FINISHED." All *before* was imperfect and inchoative; even the faith and comprehension of his chosen disciples.

It was not until the *last* supper, that our Lord said to his disciples, "Henceforth I call you not servants," why had they been as *servants* before? because "the servant *knoweth not what his Lord doeth*." (John xv. 15.)

So long as the relation of the disciples to their Lord was that of servants only, the idea of his death and resurrection, and of a second advent of their Lord, was utterly incomprehensible to them: "What is this that he saith, A little while and ye *shall not see me*; and again a little while and ye *shall see me*! and because I go to the Father;" what is this that he saith, "a little while? We cannot tell what he saith." It was not yet "*finished*." The time had not yet arrived when they should thoroughly understand these mysteries. "These things," said our

Lord, "I have spoken to you in proverbs: but the time cometh when I shall no more speak to you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father."

Then would they understand, why "they had been with him from the beginning;" namely, that they might "bear witness." Hitherto the disciples, convinced by the miracles which they had witnessed, had believed so far, namely, that Christ had *come from God*, that he was the Messiah, whom their nation expected. But, they had not understood that he was about to leave them, and to return to God; that he was about to be taken from them by an ignominious death; and to disappoint the expectation, which they had cherished, that "it had been He, which should have redeemed Israel," from a state of national degradation.

But now, at this trying and interesting hour, before he was betrayed, he explained to them, not only that he "came forth from the Father," and had "come unto the world;"—but, he added this also, "Again I leave the world, and go to the Father." This was a further confirmation of the disciples' faith. "Lo! now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb: * * * by this we believe, that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?"

We see, then, that our Lord's disciples, who had witnessed his miracles, and had heard the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, under-

stood, and fully believed, that he had come forth from God. They had heard, also, of his second coming in glory ; and of the final judgment. (Matt. xxv. 31.)

They seem, in a great measure, to have connected this event with the destruction of their Temple, which their Lord had foretold. But, they appeared to have had a very imperfect conception of that atonement, which Christ was to accomplish for them, and for the world, by an ignominious death ; and by a triumphant resurrection and ascension. They could not, altogether, separate the spiritual kingdom of their Lord from the political regeneration of their nation.

Even after the resurrection, some of the disciples imagined that the main object of Christ's appearance on earth was, to " restore again the kingdom to Israel," (Acts i. 6.)—that temporal kingdom, which had been so fiercely attacked by the Syrian, and was now held in subjection by the Roman. They knew little of the spiritual kingdom, which was the real subject of the promise to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Thus, the disciples journeying to Emmaus, viewed in the crucifixion of Christ, (not *the accomplishment*, but) the *disappointment* of their hopes. " We trusted that it had been he, which should have redeemed Israel."

The prevailing expectations of many of Christ's disciples were, in reality, those political changes,

which the chief Priests and elders falsely asserted to have been the design of our Lord himself. They vainly hoped, that the result of the Messiah's mission would be such a "perversion" of the existing degraded condition of their nation, as would terminate in a successful refusal of all "tribute to Cæsar," and a triumphant recognition of "Christ a King." (Luke xxiii. 1, 2.)

That, which many of the disciples *hoped* for, the chief Priests and elders *resented*. A design for a political regeneration was the subject of *accusation* by these latter; but it was the *earnest expectation* of the former.

The time had not yet arrived, when "the Comforter, even the *spirit of truth*, which proceedeth from the Father, should testify" of him. (John xv. 26.) Until that time, perplexity, uncertainty, and sorrow, were more or less the portion of Christ's followers. Hitherto, they travailed, as it were, in the pangs of labour, until the great consummation should be brought forth. (John xvi. 21.) They could not "bear the many things which their Lord and master had to say unto them." (John xvi. 12.) One thing, however, they had rightly apprehended, namely, that Christ was the expected Messiah; and that his mission was a *divine* mission; though they very imperfectly understood its object.

Thus, a faith in Christ's divinity, though imperfect in its conception, conferred on his early followers the

precious title to a full revelation, when the consummation should be "finished." This is fully demonstrated by our Lord's beautiful prayer to his heavenly Father in their behalf. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. They have known that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of *thee* : and have known surely that *I came out from thee* : and they have believed that *thou didst send me*."

And now, on the eve of his great self-sacrifice, he prays that the first faith of his disciples may be completed by a thorough comprehension of his joyful mission—"that they may have my joy"—he says—"fulfilled in themselves;" "that they also may be sanctified through *the truth*." "Sanctify them *through the truth*." Then he declares, what that source is, from whence the truth alone can be revealed :—" *Thy word is truth*."

That truth, revealed in God's word, our risen Lord himself vouchsafed to explain unto his disciples, when, "beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, in *all the scriptures*, the things concerning *Himself*."

Again, "the spirit of truth" addressed the disciples in the person of our Lord, when, standing in the midst of them, he said—"All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, *concerning me*." Then it was, that he fully "opened their under-

standings, that they might *understand the scriptures*—and said unto them, “*Thus it is written*, and thus it *behoved* Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*”—beginning at the very place, and among the very people, who had falsely conceived on the one hand, and had unjustly imputed and punished, on the other, a political design in his preaching and ministry.

Hence it was, that Paul and Barnabas, in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, addressed themselves first, and especially, to the *Jews*. Repentance, and a knowledge of the truth, was now open to all. “All things were now *accomplished*.” (John xix. 8.) The great consummation had been “*finished*.”

The truth was offered even to that very nation—even to those very individuals, who, in fulfilment of all that was written of him, had condemned and executed their Messiah.

They had condemned him, because, at that time, “the wisdom of God was a mystery”—“even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world,” (1 Cor. ii. 7.) “which none of the princes of this world” then knew: “for, had they known it, they *would not have crucified the Lord of glory*.”

Therefore was the gracious message first offered to the Jews. It was their privilege, as the first-born. They were the first objects of intercession,—of me-

diation—of redemption. “Father, *forgive them, for they know not what they do!*”

Thus, then, did Paul and Barnabas tender to the Jews their great privilege. “It was necessary that the Word of God should *first* have been spoken to you.”—But, alas! they “put it from them,” and “*judged themselves* unworthy of everlasting life;” seeing this, said the apostles, “lo! we turn to the Gentiles.”

The truth, which the Jews rejected, and which was proclaimed to them by a Pharisee of their own nation, by one, whose persecution against the professors of that faith had been next in degree to that of the chief Priests and Pharisees, who had actually condemned and executed Christ;—that truth was expressed by him in the following brief but comprehensive summary.

“Of David’s seed, hath God, *according to his promise*, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.” The Messiah, he tells them, had come. “Men and brethren—children of the stock of Abraham,—and whoever among you feareth God—to *you* is the word of this salvation sent. For *they that dwell at Jerusalem*, and their rulers, because *they knew him not*, nor yet the *voices of the prophets*, which are read every Sabbath-day, they have *fulfilled* them in *condemning him*.”

“And, when they had *fulfilled all that was written*

of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

BUT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD."

This is the testimony by "subsequent confirmation" which we proposed to adduce.

It is the testimony of one, who says of himself, that he was *born out of due time*. It is the testimony of one, who had been an adverse party—who had been a "*blasphemer*," a "*persecutor*," and "*injurious*." It is the testimony of that same young man Saul, who, with others of the synagogue of the Libertines," and of "Cilicia and Asia," had consented unto the death of Stephen for declaring, that he "saw, in the spirit, Jesus standing on the right hand of God." He, who had been the most zealous and bigoted opponent to the doctrine and the fact of Christ's resurrection,—now proclaims in open synagogue before the Jews of Asia

"GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD!"

It may be said, that statements in the Acts are not testimony by "subsequent confirmation" of the gospels, because they were written by the same author as the gospel of St. Luke. But Paul has spoken elsewhere for himself. "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, *was raised from the dead*." (2 Tim. ii. 8.) Again, "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and was buried; and *rose again the third day*." (1 Cor. xv. 3.)

" *If Christ be not risen* : then is our preaching vain ; and your faith is also vain." " Now is Christ risen from the dead." Again, " Jesus Christ, made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the *resurrection from the dead*." (Rom. i. 4.) Again, " He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus." (2 Cor. iv. 14.) Again, " Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who *raised him from the dead*." (Gal. i.) Again, " that ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power, which he wrought in Christ, when he *raised him from the dead*." (Eph. i. 20.)

Again—" If ye then be *risen with Christ*, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." (Col. iii.)

Thus then we find, that the same fact, the same doctrine, which Paul is recorded in the " Acts " to have preached in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, he most undoubtedly did proclaim in the epistles, which he addressed to the Christian societies at Rome, at Colosse, at Corinth, in Galatia, and at Ephesus.

We do not imagine, that there is any reasonable person, who can possibly doubt that Paul preached the Christian faith, and wrote the epistles which bear his name. No one, then, can doubt, that he had been first a persecutor of the faith, which he after-

wards adopted ; because this is fully acknowledged by himself in his epistles, as well as recorded in the Acts. No one can doubt, that, having been, not only a Jew, but a Pharisee, he became a Christian ; that, having been a persecutor, he voluntarily submitted to every kind of persecution, in support, and in attestation of the faith, which he had abhorred. All these facts are not only recorded in the Acts, but referred to, over and over again, in his own personal writings.

Mr. Hume argues against the credibility of miracles, that there is greater probability that human testimony should be false, than that phænomena, of which there has never been any previous experience in the laws of nature, should be true. The reply of Dr. Paley is, that a Divine revelation is not, per se, an improbable dispensation :—that the credentials of such a revelation must be of a miraculous character :—consequently that the improbability of miracles is not greater than the improbability of a divine revelation.

In the case of St. Paul, we have the argument of Dr. Paley illustrated by a special example. A Divine revelation is not improbable. Therefore, a revelation may have been exhibited to St. Paul—and if so it must have been in the nature of a miracle.

But the testimony of St. Paul, to the resurrection and ascension of Christ, is far higher in degree than the general rule for the credibility of miracles, which Dr. Paley has laid down.

Not only is it not "*improbable*," but it is *beyond all reasonable doubt*, that a Divine revelation *must* have been vouchsafed to St. Paul. We cannot disbelieve that St. Paul believed. And if so, the known facts of his history render it impossible to adopt any other conclusion than that he had experienced a Divine revelation.

No one can doubt that Paul was a real personage ; and that, from having been a persecuting Pharisee, he suddenly became a sincere and suffering martyr to the fact and the doctrine of Christ's resurrection and ascension. His conversion was certainly not occasioned by human persuasion. "I certify you, brethren"—he says himself—"that the gospel, which was preached of me, is *not after man*. For I neither received it of man ; neither was I taught it, but by the *revelation of Jesus Christ*."—On his *journey* to Damascus, he was a fierce and inveterate persecutor of this doctrine of the resurrection :—he *entered* Damascus an humble, contrite, and devoted proselyte to that doctrine. Some circumstance must have occurred, which converted him on this journey. That circumstance must have been the revelation recorded in the Acts,—that "*revelation of Jesus Christ*," to which he refers in the passage above quoted ; and to which he incidentally alludes, when, enumerating the several appearances of Christ after his resurrection, he says—"last of all he was seen of *me* also, as of one born out of due time." St. Paul could not have

invented, or adopted, a false story as to this revelation ; because he could not have founded that real and sincere faith, which we know he entertained, on a falsehood of his own.

If we are satisfied, that St. Paul really believed in the resurrection of Christ, (of which the sufferings which he voluntarily incurred are unquestionable proof) then, we cannot do otherwise than believe, on our parts, that his conversion was occasioned in the manner which he has described. The revelation, which was vouchsafed to St. Paul, is of equal value as evidence to us, as it was to him. We cannot doubt, that he saw the supernatural light, and heard the divine words of Christ. We cannot doubt, that he experienced a sensible miraculous revelation. This evidence is fully sufficient for us, because it leaves no room for any other doubt. If a fact be *proved* by only a single point in evidence, no other objections can disturb that proof.

Lord Lyttleton (quoted by Bishop Watson in his apology for the Bible,) comprises in the following words a summary of the whole argument, which we have attempted to set forth in this publication.

“ Besides all the proofs of the christian religion, which may be drawn from *the prophecies of the Old Testament* ; from the *necessary connection* it has with the whole system of the Jewish religion—from the miracles of Christ, and from the evidence given of his resurrection by all the other apostles ;—I THINK

THE CONVERSION AND APOSTLESHIP OF ST. PAUL ALONE, DULY CONSIDERED, IS, OF ITSELF, A DEMONSTRATION SUFFICIENT TO PROVE CHRISTIANITY TO BE A DIVINE REVELATION."

Avowed and presumptuous infidelity is not the boast of modern 'esprits forts.'

We may find revelation repudiated, because she does not appear in the garb of natural philosophy.

We may be told, that it is ecclesiastical tradition, which *confers* authority on the sacred records of gospel-truth, instead of *receiving*, from that inspired source, its only genuine credentials.

We may see the poor pride of human wisdom still struggling against a conviction of the omnipotence of God ; and attempting to explain the miraculous phenomena of His power, by our general experience of its ordinary and apparent operations.

We may observe a lamentable prevalence of carelessness and indifference, having " a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

But, infidelity, in all these shapes, would shrink from avowing its own real character.

We may even perceive that faith itself—(a faith sincere and earnest) may rest on too narrow a foundation.

Faith is a principle, which may exist under various modifications. There may be a *dependant* faith—a faith, which relies altogether on authority ; and is

too passive—(perhaps too indolent) to seek for any other than a borrowed conviction.

There may be a faith, which springs from impulse only ; which requires a perpetual stimulant ; and, which appeals to the passions, rather than to reason.

There may be a faith, of an infinitely lower degree than either of the two former : a faith of mere *acquiescence* ; a faith, which, without inquiry, without reflection, without docility, without feeling, conforms only to custom and opinion.

We do not say, that any of these several degrees of Christian faith are inoperative. Some of them must be, more or less, the foundation, on which the religion of the uninstructed classes of mankind is based.

But, so far as our opportunities will allow, if we would “ add to our faith virtue ”—we must also add to it “ knowledge.”

St. Paul tells us that, compared with the steadfast principle of Christian charity, even “ knowledge shall vanish away.” (1 Cor. xiii. 8.) He does not, however, the less exhort us that our “ *love* may abound yet more and more, in *knowledge and in all judgment.*” (Phil. i. 9.)

We have, in these realms, a Church of Christ, purified and reformed ; and sheltered by the protection of the State. We have a church, not the less catholic and apostolic, because it is national : not the

less spiritual, because it is identified with the crown, the laws, and the constitution of the realm.

We have a church, which provides for us "an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast." (Heb. vi. 19.) It is an anchor, which will not drift on the shifting sands of vague tradition; but is immovably fixed in the foundation of gospel truth.

We have, in an unbroken succession of apostolic consecration and ordination, pastors and teachers, in their several degrees, "according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Eph. ix. 7.) We have, in this sacred order, all that is requisite "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Under the auspices of an active and anxious episcopacy, and of a laborious and zealous ministry, we see the great blessing of general education slowly, but surely, progressing, year by year.

Every day, therefore, the duty is becoming more and more incumbent upon all classes, to "*add to their faith, knowledge.*"

If the Church of England has swept away the delusions of a corrupt antiquity, so is she pre-eminently distinguished by the encouragement which she offers,—by the means which she affords,—to all, of giving to *themselves*, as well as to others, a *reason* for the hope that is in them.

Let us then, in our respective stations, endeavour to be faithful in the use of those talents, which our

Lord and Master has entrusted to us, be they five, or two, or one. Let us add to our faith, knowledge; and faith itself, that fundamental principle of love to God in Christ, will be more and more productive of its proper fruits—"virtue, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, charity"—in all obedience to the will of God, through the free grace of his Holy Spirit.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A. p. 16.

It is remarkable that Mahomet points out *faith*, as the principle, on account of which God accepted the holy Fathers of old.

“ Such as *believe*,” he says, “ in God, and shall not cover the truth with a lie, shall be delivered from the torments of hell, and be conducted into the way of salvation. We before instructed Noah and his lineage in the right way. We taught it to David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Zachary, St. John, Jesus the son of Mary, Eliah, Ishmael, Jonas, and Lot. We gratified them above the residue of the world. We guided them in the right way. Those, whom God guideth, *believe* in the unity of his Divine Majesty.”

Again, in another place—“ Remember Ismael, Enoch, &c. They persevered in well-doing. We

gave them our grace, because they were righteous. Thus do I protect true believers, when they invoke me. Remember Zachary. We heard his request, gave him a son named John, and rendered his wife fruitful. Remember Mary whose womb I blessed. We inspired into her our spirit ; and gave her a son—a miracle in the world.—I will protect *true believers, that shall have done good works*. We have written in the Old Testament, and afterwards in Alcoran, that “the righteous shall inherit the earth.”—See Alcoran—translated by Du Ryer, 1649. (c. vi. “Of gratifications”—written at Medina.)

NOTE B. p. 39.

Abraham was only a sojourner in the land of the Philistines. (Gen. xxi. 34.) He paid a tribute to Abimelech of seven ewe-lambs for the privilege of digging a well. Isaac also was merely a sojourner at “Gerar.” The Lord’s command to him was—*Sojourn* in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee.” (Gen. xxvi. 3.)

Jacob after he returned from “Padan-Aram,” bought a parcel of a field of Hamor, Shechem’s father, where he had spread his tent.”

Finally he settled, and built an altar at Bethel, by divine permission. But this occupation seems to

have been by sufferance of the adjoining inhabitants, who held in awe the God whom he worshipped.

“ The terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.” (Gen. xxxv. 5.)

Thus, from Isaac, to the establishment of the Israelites in Canaan, the patriarchs and their descendants were “ strangers in a land that was not theirs.”

The whole period of their *sojourn* in Canaan, and of their bondage in Egypt, from *the birth of Isaac*, was about four hundred years : from the arrival of Abram in Canaan to the Exodus 430 years—(as stated in Exodus xii.)

NOTE B* p. 224.

The mode by which God vouchsafed to cause his glory to pass by, when he descended on the mount in a cloud, and stood in the presence of Moses, was by “ proclaiming the name of the Lord,” and his attributes. (Exodus xxxiv. 5, 6.) We have no idea of substantial entity as appertaining to the Most High. “ God is a Spirit.”—He has condescended to communicate his will, by addressing his creatures in terms which imply a personal presence ; but never-

theless—"no man hath seen God at any time." The Unity of God has been *manifested* to man by the intervention of the second person in His unity—by "the Word" of God—that word which, in the beginning was ; and was with God ; and was God." "The "Word ;" the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath *declared* Him." (John i. 1—18.)

The being of God, as an object of sense, is beyond our comprehension. We know only that, which He has been pleased to reveal. By his gracious revelation we are permitted to know that, in the unity of his entity as God the Father,—there are two other persons—"the Word," (not made, nor created, but begotten,) the only-begotten Son :"—and the Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son : neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding—the "Comforter"—the "Spirit of truth"—which "proceedeth from the Father, and testifies of Him." (John xv. 26.) Of "the Word," we know, that "the same was in the beginning with God ; and was God ; and all things were made by Him. "The Word" therefore is eternal. Whatever point we may conceive in our notions of *time*, as an heretofore, (for the human mind can scarcely divest itself of some finite idea) He then *was*. Whatever point we can look too, as an heretofore, He will be. There is no point of duration in connection with any idea of *time*, in which He was not, and is not, and will not be. He is the

beginning and the end : the Alpha, and Omega. Whatever we may conceive of a beginning—He *is*. Whatever we may conceive of an end, He *is*. His existence therefore has no connection with the conception of a beginning or an end. We are perhaps capable of no more accurate notion of eternity than this.

The mode, by which the Eternal has vouchsafed to communicate with his creatures, or to exercise his own creative power, has been “oral.” “The worlds were framed by *the word* of God.” (Heb. xi. 3.) “By *the word* of God the Heavens were of old.” (2 Peter iii. 5.)—“God *said*, Let there be light ; and there was light.”—“God *said*, Let the waters be gathered together ; and let the dry land appear.” “God *said*, Let there be lights in the firmament of the Heaven.” “God *said*, Let us make man in our own image.”—Adam and Eve “*heard the voice* of the Lord God, walking in the garden, in the cool of the day.” “And Adam and his wife hid themselves from *the presence* of the Lord God.” The presence of God, from which they hid themselves was his “*voice*”—his “*word*.”—“God *spake* unto Noah” (Gen. ix. 8.) The Lord *said* unto Abram.” (Gen. xii. 1.) “*The word of the Lord* came unto Abram in a vision.” (Gen. xv. i.) In all these cases, the manifestation is by “the word” of God. But in Gen. xvii. 1. it is written, the Lord “*appeared* to Abram.” The third verse, however, seems to

shew that this appearance was, like all the other manifestations, by his word—"God *talked* with him." So in the chapter xviii. we read—The Lord "appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre"—but this appearance was by his angels; "He looked, and lo, *three men* stood by him." These three *men*, the angels, or messengers, of God, represented by a distinct trinal personality, in human form, the unity of His majesty. Abram adored them by prostration, and addressed them as unity. "He bowed himself toward the ground, and said, *My Lord*, if now I have found favor in *thy* sight &c." They also spake as unity to Abram. "*They* said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife?—and he said, Behold, in the tent. And *he* said, I will certainly return unto thee &c." Again—"The Lord said unto Abram, Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" and "he said, nay, but thou didst laugh. And *the men* rose up from thence, and looked towards Sodom; and Abram went with them to bring them on the way." And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom; but Abram stood yet before the Lord. The divine conference is continued in the first person, "Wilt *thou* also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"—"that be far from *Thee*." "I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord." "And *the Lord* said, if I find in Sodom fifty righteous." "*I* will not destroy it for ten's sake." "And *the Lord* went his way." (Gen. xviii.)

Whether we suppose in the personal appearance

of these three messengers of God, *one* as preeminent above the others, by whom this intercession by Abram in behalf of Sodom was graciously permitted, and who was specially designated as "*the Lord*"—"the Judge of all the earth." (v. 25.)—still there was here no sensible manifestation of God in unity. There was a sensible manifestation of his word by expression ; there was a sensible manifestation of that word embodied in the personal appearance of one of these messengers as "the Angel of his presence"—there was a sensible manifestation under the human form, of that "word which in the beginning was with God, and was God" There were moreover two other angels, those spiritual ministers by whom he vouchsafed to communicate with man, who appeared also in human form. Of these three divinely commissioned and spiritual beings, He, who was the word, in denouncing divine judgment against Sodom, was devoutly addressed by Abram as "the Lord ;" the "Judge of all the earth." Now—"the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." (John v. 22.) It seems, therefore, that "the Word," which had been repeatedly manifested to Abram orally, was, on this occasion, sensibly personified in human form. This is that "Word," which "was in the beginning with God, and was God ;" without whom was not any thing made, that was made ; who was "life ;" whose life was the light of men ; "the true light, which lighteth every

man that cometh into the world ; who came unto his own ; and to as many as received Him gave He power to become the sons of God : who was made flesh and dwelt among us : whose glory we beheld ; the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"—this Word, the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father—he hath *declared* Him ; but no man *hath seen God* at any time.

Thus the mode, by which the Eternal has vouchsafed to communicate with his creatures, has been by his "word," orally ; or by a sensible manifestation of "the word" in the flesh ; and by his ministering spirits in a form adapted to the senses of human creatures.

God has exhibited also sensible demonstrations of his glory, power, and majesty, as at Horeb to Moses ; and as at Sinai to Moses and the Israelites. But, even then, all personal presence of the Deity was shrouded from the sight of man. "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke." (Ex. xix. 18.) "and there were thunders, and lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet sounding loud." But "when Moses spake, God answered him by a voice."

God declared to Moses, "Thou can'st not *see my face* ; for there shall no man *see me* and live. (Ex. xxxiii. 20.) Yet the divine mode of conference with Moses was the same as that by which God conferred with Abraham. "The Lord *spake* unto Moses face to face, as a man *speaketh* unto his friend," (ibid. 11.)

Thus also, "the Lord had *said* unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country," and the Lord appeared unto Abram and *said*, unto thy seed will I give this land. The appearance was by speech; by his "Word."

On the occasion of the most important incident of Abraham's history, the offering of Isaac, God's Word is called the *angel* of the Lord. "The *angel* of the Lord *called* unto him out of heaven, *and said*." (Gen. xxii. 11.) and again (v. 15.) The angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time. Yet the message announced a most solemn adjuration by God in unity. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord," and the ground of the great blessing then pronounced was this—"because thou hast obeyed *my voice*." (Gen. xxii. 18.)

Thus God has manifested himself to his creatures by his "Word," who "was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory; the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father." This glory was a "fulness of grace and truth:" "and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, the "Word" of God, to Abraham (your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.) The same word "was in the world," "was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" and "of his fulness," the "fulness of his grace and truth" have all we, who are children of Abraham by

promise, "partaken." But in the essence of his Unity, no man hath *seen* God at any time. The "Word," the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath *declared* Him. Thus St. Paul, also, describes the Almighty to Timothy as "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom *no man hath seen or can see.*" (1 Tim. vi. 16.) Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, spake saying, "the Lord said, that he would dwell in the thick darkness. Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee!" (1 Kings viii. 12, 27.) Moses also says to the Israelites, "The Lord *spake* unto you out of the midst of the fire. Ye heard *the voice of the words*, but *saw no similitude, only ye heard a voice.*" (Deut. iv. 12.)

But we know that the "Word," the only-begotten Son in the bosom of his Father, is appointed to special functions in relation to the designs of God the Father (that is, God in *unity*) towards his creature man. In the exercise of these functions, the Word of God, the Son of God, is, as it were, distinct in person from the unity of the eternal God-head? He has communicated with man as the "angel of God's presence," of whom Isaiah speaks, (lxiii. 9.) "*the angel of his presence* saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old."

The "angel of God's presence," who "bare them

and carried them all the days of old," the same "*saved* them; and in his love, and in his pity, He *redeemed* them." He was their Saviour. "In all their affliction, He was afflicted." (8, 9.) But as when "he bare them and carried them all the days of old;" so also, when "he saved them in his love, and in his pity redeemed them," "they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit." (10.) He "trod the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with him." (3.) "Therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them." But how did the angel of God's presence avenge the rebellion of his chosen people? In a temporal sense he "trod down the people in his anger; and made them drunk in his fury; and brought down their strength to the earth," (v. 6.) But he gave himself as a sacrifice, to provide the precious blood of atonement for their transgressions. How graciously does he exclaim in the words of his chosen prophet, "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold! therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me," (3, 5.) His fury upheld his arm, not to strike with the blow of vengeance; but to hold forth the shield of salvation! "for the day of vengeance is in my heart; and the year of my redeemed is come." In his heart the day of vengeance is in the year of *His redemption*. Such is "the wrath of the Lamb," (Rev. vi. 16.) according to his mercies, and according

to the multitude of his loving-kindness, "towards" his people, "children that will not lie," (8,) when he hath "put his Holy Spirit within them." (11.)

It was to this angel of God's presence, thus doubly celebrated by the prophet as bearing and carrying his people all the days of old from their bondage in Egypt, to the promised land of Canaan; and again from their bondage of the law to the "liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free," (Gal. v. 1.) that Moses addressed his supplication. "Shew me now thy way that I may know thee." (Ex. xxxiii. 13.) The Lord's answer was "*My presence shall go with thee.*"

Moses replied, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not that *thou* goest with us." He therefore whom Moses was then addressing, was himself the angel of God's presence,—the same, who, Isaiah says, "bare them and carried them all the days of old." "And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken." That is, I, the Word of God, who am with God, and am God—am here the angel of His presence, with whom I am one; and for whom I exercise here a distinct function as his Word, as the angel of his presence. I, the One God, comprise in my unity a second person—namely my "Word," who is the angel, or messenger, or ambassador, of my *presence*, I in him, will go with thee. The angel of my presence ~~is~~ my

presence, and thus my presence shall go with thee : because, though in person distinct, in God-head we are One.

But Moses added this further request. "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." (18.) The essence of God in unity could not be seen by man. God said, "Thou canst not *see* my face ; for there shall no man *see* me, and live." "I will make all *my goodness* pass before thee ; and I will *proclaim* the name of the Lord before thee ; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." (19.) "And the Lord descended in a cloud, and stood with him there ; and proclaimed the name of the Lord. The Lord ! the Lord God ! merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth ; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin : and that will by no means clear the guilty." Thus spake the "Word" when he proclaimed the attributes of his holy name, in unity ! How merciful ! how gracious ! how abundant in goodness and truth ! For thousands he has mercy ! for iniquity, transgression, and sin he has forgiveness. But the thick darkness of guilt can never be made "clear" in his most holy sight. The iniquity of those who vainly presume to make clear in his sight, the essential darkness of guilt, by indulgences for sin, or meritorious works, will be visited upon the "children's children, to the third and fourth generation," of

those, who are trained up in this fatal doctrine of delusion.

It was thus, that "the Word," the angel of God's presence, the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father; who bare his people, and carried them all the days of old: and who also, in his love and his pity hath redeemed them; it was thus, that he proclaimed the name of the Lord to Moses, and made all his goodness to pass before him.

There were however, ministering angels, angels far inferior in degree to the angel of God's presence, who conducted the Israelites in their journey, and protected them in their conflicts with the heathen nations of Canaan.

"The Lord said unto Moses, Depart . . . thou and thy people . . . and I will send an angel before thee, and will drive out the Canaanite. For *I* will not go up in the midst of thee—for thou art a stiff-necked people." (Ex. xxxiii. 1.) So also, (xxxii. 34.) "Go, lead the people unto the place, of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine angel shall go before thee." And before (xxiii. 20.) "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place, which I have prepared."

The angel thus commissioned to take the charge and guardianship of the hosts of Israel, seems to have been that "angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel" when they were pursued by Pharaoh. (xiv. 19.)

This was clearly not the angel of God's presence, whose direct communications were the authority by which Moses was commissioned.

On the whole of this view, we may, perhaps, comprehend St. Paul's meaning, when he wrote, in his epistle to the Galatians, that "the law was ordained by *angels* in the hands of a Mediator"—not by God, in the incomprehensible and incommunicable essence of his unity, but by *angels*. He communicated with Moses by the "angel of his presence"—by "the Word," which was with God and was God—the second person in the Trinity; the great "I am," in *unity* of the eternal God-head. He conducted the people by the ministering angel of the tabernacle. God in unity did not ordain the law in the hands of a mediator, because "God is one;" and a mediator is not a mediator of one. But a mediator was necessary to a covenant. A mediator was necessary to both covenants; to the covenant of the law, and also to the covenant of promise and grace. Moses was the mediator of the legal covenant between "the Word"—the "Angel of presence," and the children of Israel—not between God as unity, but between God in the person of his own delegated *word*, according to that mystery of a Trinity in Unity, which he has revealed, and which we know but cannot explain.

But "the Word," the only-begotten Son in the bosom of his Father, was *made flesh*, and *dwelt among us*, that He himself, who was with God, and was God,

might, in the second person of his Trinity, be the mediator between the Unity of his God-head and his sinful creature man.

In his unapproachable unity there could be no mediator with God. "God is one"—"a mediator is not a mediator of one." But in trinity a mediator is provided, by a distinction of persons in the unity; and thus, there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. ii. 5.)

Moses, then, was the mediator of the bondage of the law; but God himself, in the person of his only-begotten Son, was his own mediator in that gracious covenant of liberty, "wherewith Christ has made us free."

Thus we see how essential to the whole scheme of salvation, how essential to any direct intercourse between the invisible Creator, and the creatures of His wisdom, and power, and goodness, is this revealed mystery of a Trinity in persons, in the Unity of the God-head.

The creative power was exercised by the energy of this distinction in person: for "the worlds were framed by the Word of God." (Heb. xi. 3.) "In the beginning was "the Word." All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made, that was made." (John i.)

By his "Word" God held a gracious intercourse with man, whom he had formed in his own image.

Adam and Eve heard *the voice* of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day. By "His Word," the covenant of promise was established with Abraham; the covenant of the law with the Israelites through Moses, as a *mediator*; the covenant of grace with the children of the promise through the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. ii. 5.)

"The Word," as mediator between God and men, is, at one and the same time, distinct in person, yet absorbed in Unity. Thus our blessed Lord declared of himself, "I am not alone; but *I and the Father* that sent me." "I bear record of myself, yet my record is true." He appeals to that degree of testimony which the Jews acknowledged as sufficient evidence. "It is written in your law, that the testimony of *two men* is true." The double testimony which he adduces is that of himself and the Father, as *two in one*. "I am one, that bear witness of myself; and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." (John viii. 16—18.—and x. 30.)

"I and my Father are one."

The covenant of God, to which He is thus *his own mediator*, is necessarily a covenant of free grace. To such a covenant there is no intermediate assessor, nor can there be. There is nothing given on the side of the party benefited, there can be no claim therefore of debt by that party; but the covenant is a gift of free grace—it is unmerited pardon,

mercy, love, acceptance. Who shall claim, as of right, a condition of agreement on such a boon? Such was the covenant of promise to Abraham. Such is the "better covenant," of which "Christ is the mediator."

But, to the covenant of the law, "the Word,"—the *angel* of God's presence—his messenger, his ambassador, being distinct from Unity, admits the office of a human mediator. Moses was that mediator. This covenant was one of works; a temporal compensation of prosperity on the one hand, conditioned on a performance of the law on the other. Thus St. Paul tells the Galatians that "it was ordained by *angels* in the hand of a mediator." Why? because "*God is one.*" "Now a mediator is not a mediator of *one.*"

We thus see clearly, the great distinction and difference between the covenant of promise and of grace; and the covenant of *works*. The latter is founded on principles altogether conformable to our worldly notions and modes of action. There is a performance of a duty prescribed on the one hand—a consequent debt of obligation recognised on the other; a mediator appointed between the two contracting parties. It was an agreement set up to counteract and supersede transgression. "Wherefore serveth the law? It was added because of transgression."

"By the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.) It is, as it were, "the tree of knowledge of good and evil." As this knowledge was the neces-

sary consequence of our first parents' disobedience ; so is the law the consequence of the proneness of the Israelites to transgress the spiritual worship, and holy will of Almighty God. It " was added " to that pure, primitive faith of Abraham, working obedience by love, to which righteousness was imputed by the grace of God. The præcision of a recorded law became necessary, " because of transgression,"—because the descendants of Abraham had lost sight of " the righteousness of God without the law " (Rom. iii. 21.)—" even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe." (Ibid.)

But the covenant of grace was ordained for a far more comprehensive and effectual victory over transgression. The law was only added because of transgression: to set a mark upon it: to define it: to apply that sentence of judgment, which divine justice had annexed to it. " The law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did." (Heb. vii. 19.) The object of that better hope was, " to finish transgression, and to make an end of sin; to make reconciliation for iniquity;" (Dan. ix. 24.)—" to blot out our transgressions, to wash us thoroughly from our iniquities: and to cleanse us from our sins;" (Ps. li. 1, 2.) " to blot out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us; which was contrary to us; to take it out of the way, nailing it to the cross, having forgiven us all trespasses;"

(Col. ii. 14.)—and thus “to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.” (Dan. ix. 24.) The covenant of law is the *tree of knowledge*. But the covenant of grace is the *tree of life*, whose “leaves are for the healing of the nations;” (Rev. xxii. 2.)—of which “they that eat, shall live for ever.” (Gen. iii. 22.)

How complete is the *unity* of this revelation! How triumphantly has it survived all the defections of human rebellion! It shone perfect in Adam: it became obscured by his fall. It revived in Abraham; it languished under the law. It was accomplished in Christ—“the light of the world;” (John viii. 12.) and was proclaimed by his apostles, who “walked in the light, as he is in the light.” (1 John i. 7.)

That glorious light was again obscured by her, whose “seat is on the seven mountains;” “whose raiment is purple and scarlet, who is decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls; on whose forehead is a name written—Mystery—Babylon the great; the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth; who is drunken with the blood of the saints; and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” (Rev. xvii. 6.) She would have quenched that light.—But, although “the light of the candle shone no more in her,” (Rev. xviii. 23.) it still gleamed in the valleys of Piedmont. Illumined by that light, even “the merchants, which were made rich by her,

stood afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing." (Ibid.)*

The same light in the hands of Wicliffe blazed through the dark cloisters of Oxford. It dawned on the mountains of Bohemia; and, finally, it burst forth once more in full effulgence from the schools of Wittemberg, and the lakes of Switzerland. From thence the same pure faith, although alas!

"—— full many a dark and stormy year,
She dropp'd o'er Albion's isle the patriot tear;—
With sorrow heard the papal thunders roll,
And mourn'd th' ignoble bondage of the soul;—
Now, greatly dares sublimest aims to scan,
Enriches science, and ennobles man—
Unveils the semblance which its God bestow'd,
And draws more near the fount, from whence it flow'd."
(Richards's Oxford Prize Poem.)

Such are the spiritual, such are even the temporal blessings, which the light of God's one revelation dispenses. For, "Godliness is profitable unto all things; having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. iv. 8.)

Let us contemplate those nations which have hitherto shut their eyes to the pure effulgence of that light of "liberty wherewith Christ hast made us free." (Gal. v. 1.)

Our blessed Lord has said, "If the Son shall

* In the twelfth century Peter Waldus, an opulent merchant of Lyons, caused the gospels to be translated into French. He abandoned his mercantile vocation, distributed his riches among the poor; and founded an evangelical sect in opposition to the errors of Rome.—(See Mosheim, Ecc. Hist. cent. xii. c. v.)

make you free, ye shall be free indeed." What then is the condition of those people, who have not accepted the freedom, which he has so graciously offered? "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" (2 Cor. iii. 17.)—*religious liberty*, and *civil liberty*. We shall look for these sister blessings in vain, where the "Spirit of the Lord" is not. Shall we find them in the autocracy of the Greek church? in the despotism of the Cæsars? in the endless civil conflicts of the Peninsula? or in the states of Italy? where

"In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults thro' all his manners reign;
Though poor, luxurious; tho' submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew."—GOLDSMITH.

Let us turn to a more melancholy scene; more melancholy, because exhibited in close connection with ourselves. If we read the description of God's judgments on those, "among whom there is a root, that beareth gall and wormwood;" (Deut. xxix. 18.)—there will be no need to name this unhappy land. It is a land "that is not sown, nor beareth." It is a land whose miserable condition is too aptly described in such judgments as the following. "Thou shalt be oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee."

"The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto

thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land."

"Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof."

"Thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them."

"The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be oppressed, and crushed, alway."

"Thou shalt carry much seed out into thy field, and shalt gather but little in."

"Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them."

"The stranger, that is within thee, shalt get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail." (Deut. xxviii. 18.)

NOTE C. p. 308.

Paul has not more clearly explained to the
day their forgotten faith, the faith of
Abraham, than Isaiah proclaimed the
hundred years before.
directs those, who would "fol-

low after true righteousness," and would seek the Lord where only he is to be found. He enjoins the people of Judah, not to look to Moses; not to look to Sinai, not to look to the law or to the righteousness of an obedience to the law; but to go back to the fountain-head; to rest on their original foundation; to "look unto the rock whence they were hewn; and to the hole of the pit, whence they were digged. To look unto *Abraham their father*, and unto *Sarah* that bare them." "For," says the prophet, speaking in the name of the Lord, I called *him alone*, and *blessed him*, and increased *him*.

Thus he shews, that it is to the promise vouchsafed to the faith of their father Abraham, that the *true Jerusalem*, (not the Jerusalem which is represented by Hagar, the Jerusalem which *now is*, and is in bondage with her children, but the Jerusalem which is above, and which is free,) is to look for her glorious privileges.

It is through Abraham and Sarah, (not through Moses and the law,) that "the Lord shall comfort Zion; shall comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein; thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." For they are to look for another law than that of Sinai. "Hearken unto me, my people," says the Lord by his prophet, "give ear unto me, O my nation. For a law shall proceed from ME, and I will

make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. *My righteousness is near* ; my salvation is gone forth ; and mine arms shall *judge the people*." What people are here included ? The people of Israel only ? No, "*the Isles*" (that is the Gentiles) shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust." (Is. li.)

Thus, throughout the whole of those sublime and beautiful chapters, the LIst. and LIInd., the Prophet unfolds, as it were, the future advent of their Messiah's spiritual kingdom. Zion is to awake from the dream of her bondage—to put on strength, to put on her beautiful garments, to shake off her dust, and to loose from her neck the bands of her captivity. For, "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth *good tidings* (the *gospel*) that bringeth good tidings of good ; that publisheth *salvation* ; that saith unto Zion, Thy King reigneth. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem : for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath *redeemed Jerusalem*. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of *all the nations* ; and *all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God*."

The "servant" of God who is to accomplish this great salvation "shall deal prudently ; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high."

Nevertheless his visage is to be so *marred*, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.' Yet—"shall he sprinkle many nations" (sprinkle

them with the waters of baptism.) “Kings shall shut their mouths at him.” (The gainsaying of heathen princes and governments shall be stopped.)

“For that which had not been told them, they shall see, and that which they had not heard, they shall consider.”

Then the prophet proceeds in the LIIIrd chapter to give a minute description of this blessed Messiah, on whom “the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.”

NOTE D. p. 337.

Impatience seems to have been one of the besetting sins of the children of Israel. We find a striking proof of this in Exodus xvi. 3, when they yearned after the “flesh-pots of Egypt.” In the same spirit, imagining that they were abandoned by Moses, and by the God of Moses and their fathers, they may have impiously adopted the Egyptian Apis, and the idols of that country of their bondage. “Up—make us Gods!”—was their cry to Aaron.—But it seems evident that Aaron, while, with unpardonable weakness, he yielded to the clamour of the congregation, attempted a sort of compromise, by which the golden calf should be worshipped as a symbol of God. He took from them their golden ornaments, and made of them a “molten calf.” And

“ *they said* ” (the *people*, not Aaron)—“ these be thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” But, “ when Aaron saw it, he *built an altar before it*, and made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is the feast of the Lord.”

“ And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered *burnt-offerings*, and brought *peace-offerings*.” Neither of these offerings are of an idolatrous or heathen character. The first—the burnt-offering, was a patriarchal sacrifice continued from the time of Abraham himself. (See Gen. xxii. 7, 8.) The peace-offering was one of the ordinances recorded in Exod. xx. 24. It was ordained with this remarkable injunction—“ Ye shall not make *with me* gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy *burnt-offerings*, and thy *peace-offerings*.” This command seems to intimate a proneness, on the part of the Israelites, to connect the symbolical, idolatrous worship, of Egypt, with the worship of Jehovah. We have here, apparently, a clear explanation of the kind of offence, which was perpetrated by the Israelites in the matter of the golden calf. Aaron admitted the idolatrous symbol, but he rejected the idolatrous cry—“ These be thy Gods, O Israel ”—and he proclaimed a feast *to the Lord*.” He built an altar before this image, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. Thus, he conformed to the ordinance referred to—“ an altar of

earth shalt thou make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings:"—but, he disobeyed the injunction, "Ye shall not make *with me* gods of silver nor gold."

Now, will any reasonable man say, that even this transaction justifies Mr. Gibbon's sneer, that "the cotemporaries of Moses and Joshua beheld, with the most careless indifference, the most amazing miracles?"

Let us consider a few other instances. An Israelitish woman named Shelomith, of the tribe of Dan, had a son by an Egyptian father. This man "blasphemed the name of the Lord, and cursed."—And "Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed, out of the camp, and stone him with stones." "And the children of Israel *did as the Lord commanded Moses.*" (Lev. xxiv. 23.) Was this careless indifference?

Prone to impatience and discontent, the Israelites certainly were. They could not sustain their privations in the wilderness, and longed for "the fish, which they did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick,"—and "loathed the manna." (Numb. xi. 4.) But the punishment, which the Lord inflicted upon them for this repining spirit, must have produced any impression rather than "careless indifference." "The Lord smote the people with a very great plague." When judgment was pronounced

upon them for murmuring at the report of the spies, they were neither careless, nor indifferent. "They rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo ! we be here, and will go up unto the place, which the Lord hath promised : *for we have sinned.*" (Numb. xiv. 40.)

In the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, the indignation of the people was expressed, not against their God, but against his ministers. "They murmured against Moses, and against Aaron, saying, *Ye have killed the people of the Lord.*" (Numb. xvi. 41.) "At Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah," the spirit which they exhibited was of the same character—impatience—and a rebellious discontent : but not a "careless indifference." In the matter of Achan, of the tribe of Judah, who committed a trespass in "the accursed thing," by concealing the spoils of the heathen, there was no carelessness or indifference shewn by the people ; but "all Israel stoned him with stones"—and burned the booty with fire. (Joshua vii. 25.)

Finally, when Joshua tested their faith at Shechem, saying, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," "the people answered and said—God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods." "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." (Joshua xxiv. 16. 24.)

Mr. Gibbon, in his note, (p. 271. 8vo. ed. vol. ii.) quotes Numbers xiv. 11.—"How long will this peo-

ple provoke me ; and how long will it be ere they *believe* me, for all the signs, which I have shewn among them ? ” He adds—“ it would be easy, but it would be unbecoming, to justify the complaint of the Deity from the whole tenor of the Mosaic history.”

Now, what is the nature of that unbelief, which the Lord, in the above passage, imputes to the Israelites ? The object of the historian’s sarcasm is sufficiently evident : namely, that sensible miracles must command belief ; and that, therefore, the admitted unbelief of the Israelites discredits the whole Mosaic account of miracles. But, is there anything in the pusillanimity, discontent, impatience, and disobedience of the Jews, when suffering under privations, hardships, and terror, which proves that they actually *disbelieved* their God Jehovah, and the wonders which he had performed in their sight ? It may as well be said, that there is no faith among christians, because that principle is not sufficiently strong to prevent all disobedience and rebellion against the laws of God.

The unbelief of the Israelites was of that kind, which, alas ! we daily witness even among the most sincere christians of the present day ; and which all men experience, more or less, in themselves. It is the occasional ascendancy of the impulses of time and sense, over spiritual convictions, however sincere.

The criminal, who breaks the laws of his country,

and subjects himself to their penalties, acts as if he had no belief in the authority of the one, or in the infliction of the other. When he yields to temptation, regardless of the consequences ; exhortations, warnings, experience, and examples, are all thrown away upon him. The State might address these delinquents in the words quoted by Mr. Gibbon—"How long will this people provoke me ; how long will it be, ere they believe me ?" The kind of unbelief, which is exemplified in these cases, is well defined by the terms used in certain forms of indictment :-- ("not having the fear of God before his eyes ; but being moved and instigated by the devil.") Thus the crimes of the Israelites were denounced by God as sins of unbelief ; that is, of a defective and inoperative faith.

But *unbelief*, in a special abstract sense, was impossible in the case of the Israelites. A man cannot disbelieve his own eye-sight, his own senses, and his own experience ; nor does any such impossibility appear, as Mr. Gibbon says it does, in the "whole tenor of the Mosaic history"—but quite the reverse, as we have shewn.

Seduced by the daughters of Moab, "the people bowed down to their gods, and joined themselves to Baal-peor." But these grievous sins were not perpetrated by the nation generally. The offenders, though numerous, were limited in number. They amounted to "twenty-and-four thousand," who all

perished in the plague. "All the men that followed Baal-peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye, that did cleave unto the Lord your God, are alive every one of you this day." (Deut. iv. 3.) Can such *partial* instances of defection as these justify the following passage?

'Under the pressure,' says the historian, 'of every calamity, the belief of these miracles has preserved the Jews of a late period from the universal contagion of idolatry: and in contradiction to every known principle of the human mind, that singular people seems to have yielded a stronger and more ready assent to the tradition of their remote ancestors, than to the evidence of their own senses.' We have adverted to most of the occasional lapses of the early Israelites, and have shewn that they were not so very "singular a people" as to refuse assent to the evidence of their own senses. A very "singular people" indeed they must have been, if they had. But let us see whether their remote descendants of a "late period" were, in so superior a degree, preserved from the "universal contagion of idolatry."

In the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (B.C. 174.) "went there out of Israel wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the heathen that are round about us; for, since we departed from them, we have had much sorrow. So this device pleased them well. * * * Whereupon they built a place of exercise at Jerusalem according

to the *customs of the heathen*: and made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and were sold to do mischief." (Maccabees i. 11.) Again, at a subsequent period, after the expedition of Antiochus into Egypt,—“ many also of the Israelites consented to his religion, and sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the sabbath.”

Instead of this “ contradiction to every known principle of the human mind,” on which Mr. Gibbon insists, we find a very curious parallelism between the conduct of the Jews of this late period and their ‘ more remote ancestors.’ “ There came one of the Jews, in the sight of all, to sacrifice on the altar, which was at Modin, according to the king’s commandment. Which thing when Mattathias saw, he was inflamed with zeal: wherefore he ran, and slew him upon the altar. Thus dealt he zealously for the law of God, *like as Phineas did to Zimri the son of Salu.*’

Whoever reads the first chapters in the book of Maccabees will see, that a more false assertion was never made by an historian, than that “ under the pressure of every calamity the belief of the miracles (recorded by Moses) preserved the Jews of a *later period* from the universal contagion of idolatry.” No assertion can be more false, except the remark by the same writer, that “ the cotemporaries of Moses

and Joshua beheld with careless indifference the most amazing miracles."

Such are the weapons of scepticism even in the most skilful hands.

NOTE E. p. 353.

The writer remembers to have met in the year 1814, while travelling in the states of the Grand Duke of Baden, an officer belonging to a regiment in the contingent of Hesse d'Armstadt, who told him, that he and his corps were in garrison at Badajoz, during the memorable siege of that fortress. This statement might have been a mere gasconade. The officer's assertion did not prove the fact, that he and his corps were there. But, in the year 1847, thirty-three years afterwards, the present writer happened to read in Mr. Grattan's Memoirs of the "Connaught Rangers," the following sentence in the account, which he gives of that siege. "One entire regiment of Germans, called the regiment of Hesse d'Armstadt, that defended the ravelin, was put to death. (p. 274.)

This is in the nature of an undesigned and accidental confirmation of the officer's statement. Nor is this testimony at all weakened, because Mr. Grat-

tan somewhat exaggerated the circumstances, by describing the entire regiment as put to death—one officer having certainly survived, if the informant was present. The evidence is sufficient to prove the account *generally*, though there may be an error in strict and minute particulars. Thus, the quotations by Clement, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome, of sentences found in St. Matthew's Gospel, sufficiently prove that this history was extant, and was received as of authority, in their day, whether it was written by Matthew or not. The testimony is postponed as to time; it is also indirect and accidental; but it is the more convincing on the latter account. It certainly is not absolutely impossible, in the one case, that the officer was not present at Badajoz though his regiment was: or, in the other, that the sentences quoted by Clement from the epistle of Barnabas, though found in Matthew's gospel, were inserted from some other previous writing, which Barnabas might have quoted, and Matthew also—but, in both cases, such presumptions would not be fair, reasonable, and candid doubts, but obstinate and perverse cavils.



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